

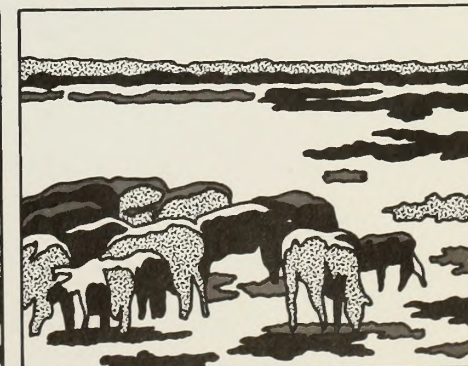
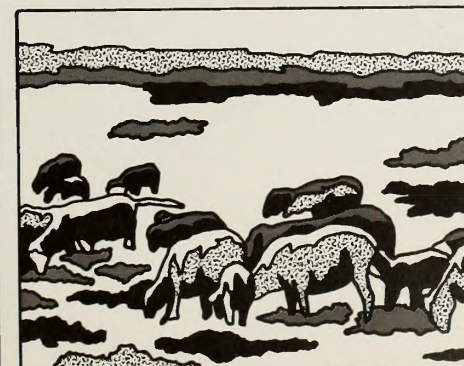
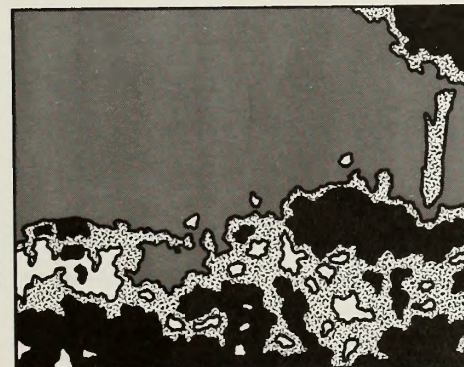
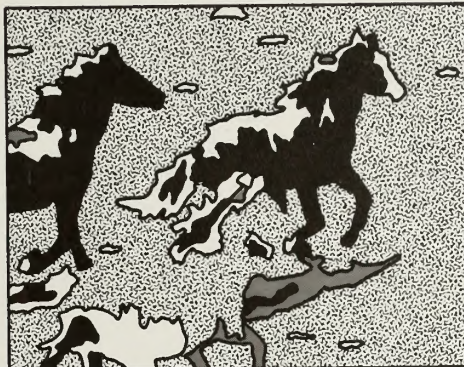
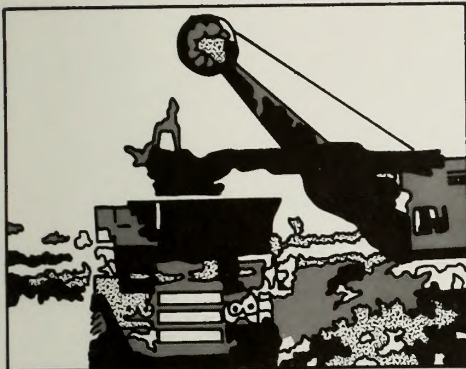


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NEWCASTLE RESOURCE AREA

WYOMING Land Use Decisions

Casper District



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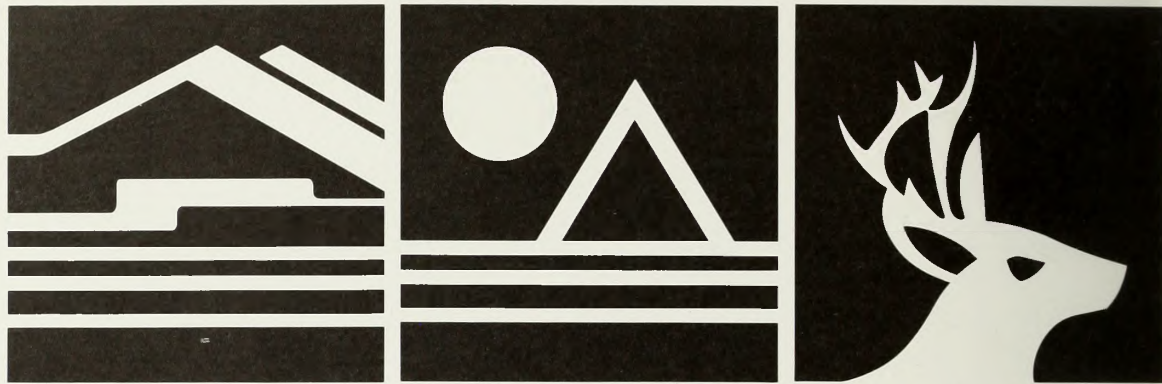
U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

Lands

Recreation

Wildlife Habitat



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Forestry

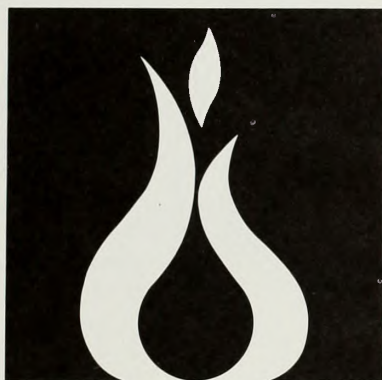
Minerals

Range Management

Soil, Water and Air

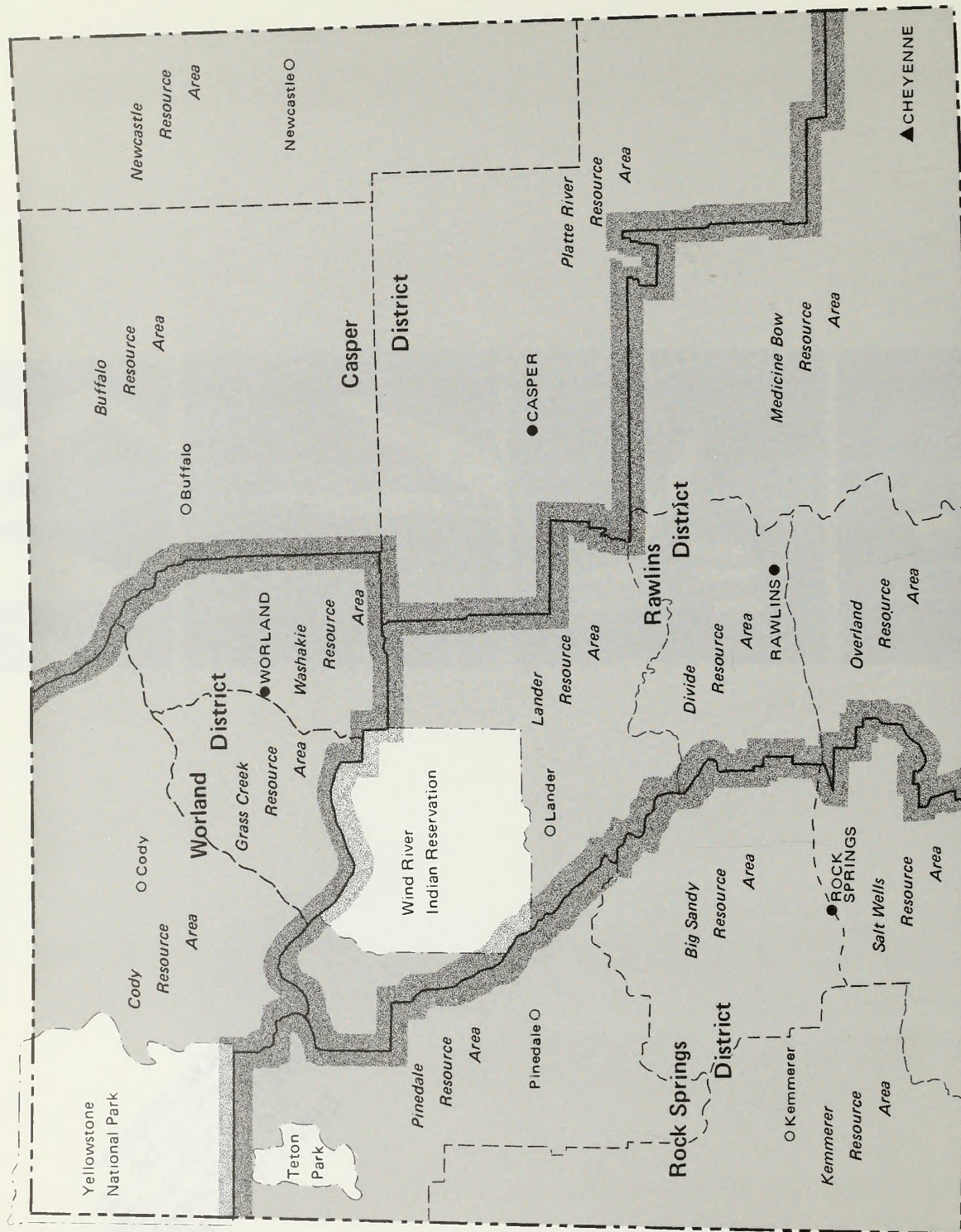
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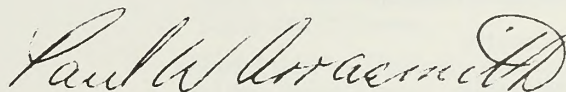
Bureau of Land Management Offices in Wyoming



Purpose

This brochure summarizes the Management Framework Plan (MFP) decisions for public lands and federal mineral estate in the Newcastle Resource Area which includes Crook, Weston and Niobrara Counties.

My staff and I wish to thank the many organizations and individual citizens who contributed information and ideas to this plan. If you have questions or if you would like to review specific portions of the MFP at our Newcastle or Casper offices, please let us know.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Paul W. Arrasmith".

**Paul Arrasmith
Casper District Manager
February 1982**

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Purpose of Plan

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administers public resources which are subject to a variety of demands and uses such as energy and minerals development, livestock grazing, timber harvesting, recreation and wildlife habitat. The Management Framework Plan decisions allocate resources and land uses through a process of identifying and resolving use conflicts. The decisions apply only to public lands and federal mineral estate administered by BLM.

The plan is a working document which serves as a guide for day-to-day management of the public lands and federal mineral estate.

The Management Framework Plan also serves as an essential document for accomplishing on-the-ground projects such as weed and pest control, range improvement projects, timber sales, provision for recreation facilities, and wildlife habitat improvement projects. The plan is a vital link between management and budgeting. Areas without sound resource management plans generally receive lower priority for funding to accomplish such management actions.

BLM Role in Private Surface/ Federal Mineral Estate

1. **Basic Responsibility** — Much of the private land in eastern Wyoming was originally acquired under federal laws, which reserved to the public the right to explore and mine underlying minerals. BLM is responsible for administering federal mineral estate underlying both public and private lands.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and a number of other laws, executive and secretarial orders, and regulations require the Bureau of Land Management to carry out the following major responsibilities for federal minerals including those reserves underlying privately owned surface:

- a. Administer the leasing and selling of federally owned minerals;
 - b. Identify impacts of mineral extraction and develop proper surface protection and rehabilitation stipulations to minimize adverse impacts on all resources including livestock forage, wildlife, threatened and endangered species, historic and archeological sites, watershed, timber, recreation and air and water quality;
 - c. Require performance bonds to assure surface protection and reclamation stipulations are followed.
2. **Oil and Gas** — There are four basic phases in oil and gas development on federal mineral estate: leasing, drilling, production and abandonment. Currently, BLM's role in each phase is as follows:
 - a. **Leasing** — BLM evaluates areas to be considered for leasing and determines whether to lease, and if the decision is to lease, attaches proper surface protection and rehabilitation stipulations to minimize adverse environmental impacts.

- b. **Drilling** — Prior to drilling, the driller must file an Application for Permit to Drill with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and BLM. The application is approved only after BLM conducts, in cooperation with the private surface owner, an on-the-ground examination to: refine stipulations attached at the time of leasing; identify and avoid, if necessary, impacts on archeological resources, and threatened and endangered species; and assure a drill site is selected to minimize environmental impacts.

Supervision of drill site construction and actual drilling operations is USGS's responsibility.

- c. **Production** — USGS is responsible for supervision of producing oil and gas wells on federal mineral estate.
- d. **Abandonment** - BLM, in cooperation with the private owner, is responsible for inspection of abandoned drill sites and procedures to assure reclamation stipulations are followed.
3. **Sand and Gravel** — In the past sand and gravel was considered a federal mineral on private surface/federal mineral estate. The Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals recently ruled that sand and gravel was not a mineral in lands acquired under the Stock Raising Homestead Act of 1916.

The ruling may be appealed sometime in the future, but currently sand and gravel in lands originally acquired under the Stock Raising Homestead Act are the property of the surface owner.

4. **Geophysical Exploration** — BLM is involved with geophysical exploration only on BLM administered public lands. BLM requires a permit, bond to insure rehabilitation of damages, and notification of beginning and completion of operations. BLM inspects the area after completion and holds the companies bond until rehabilitation is satisfactory.

Under current laws BLM cannot require permits, bonds or rehabilitation on private surface/federal mineral estate.



Planning Area

The planning area includes Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties. BLM administered public lands and mineral estate are shown on maps 1-6. Table 1 summarizes the amount of land with BLM responsibility.

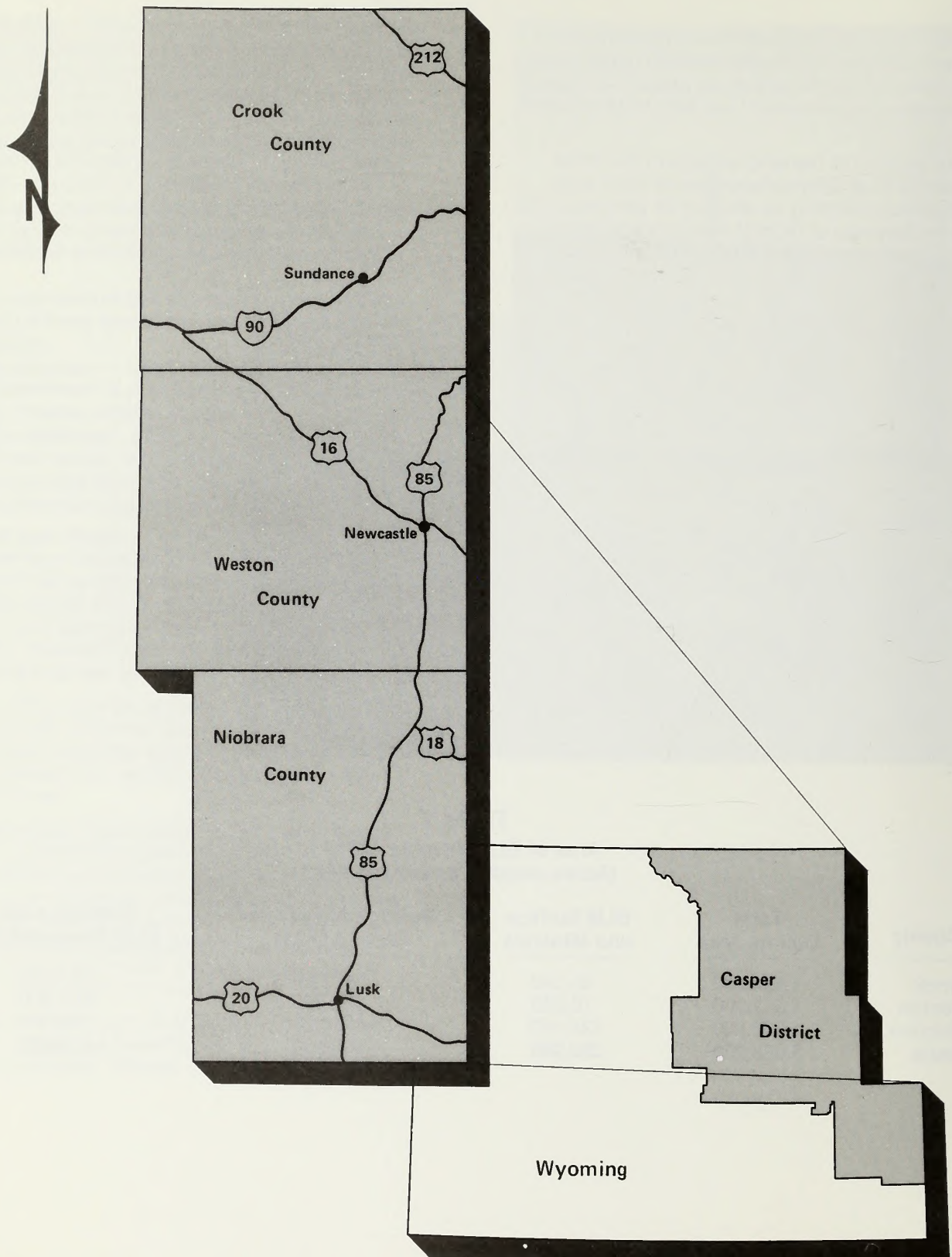
About 6 percent of the land surface in the three counties is BLM administered public land. BLM also has responsibility on another 28 percent of the lands for disposal of federal minerals and associated protection and rehabilitation requirements.



Table 1
Area of BLM Responsibility
(Acres-rounded to nearest 100)

<u>County</u>	<u>Total County Area</u>	<u>BLM Surface and Minerals</u>	<u>BLM Minerals-Other Surface Owner</u>	<u>Total Area with BLM Responsibility</u>
Crook	1,854,100	93,300	357,900	451,200
Weston	1,541,100	76,500	424,800	501,300
Niobrara	1,673,000	124,100	622,200	746,300
Totals	5,068,200	293,900	1,404,900	1,698,800

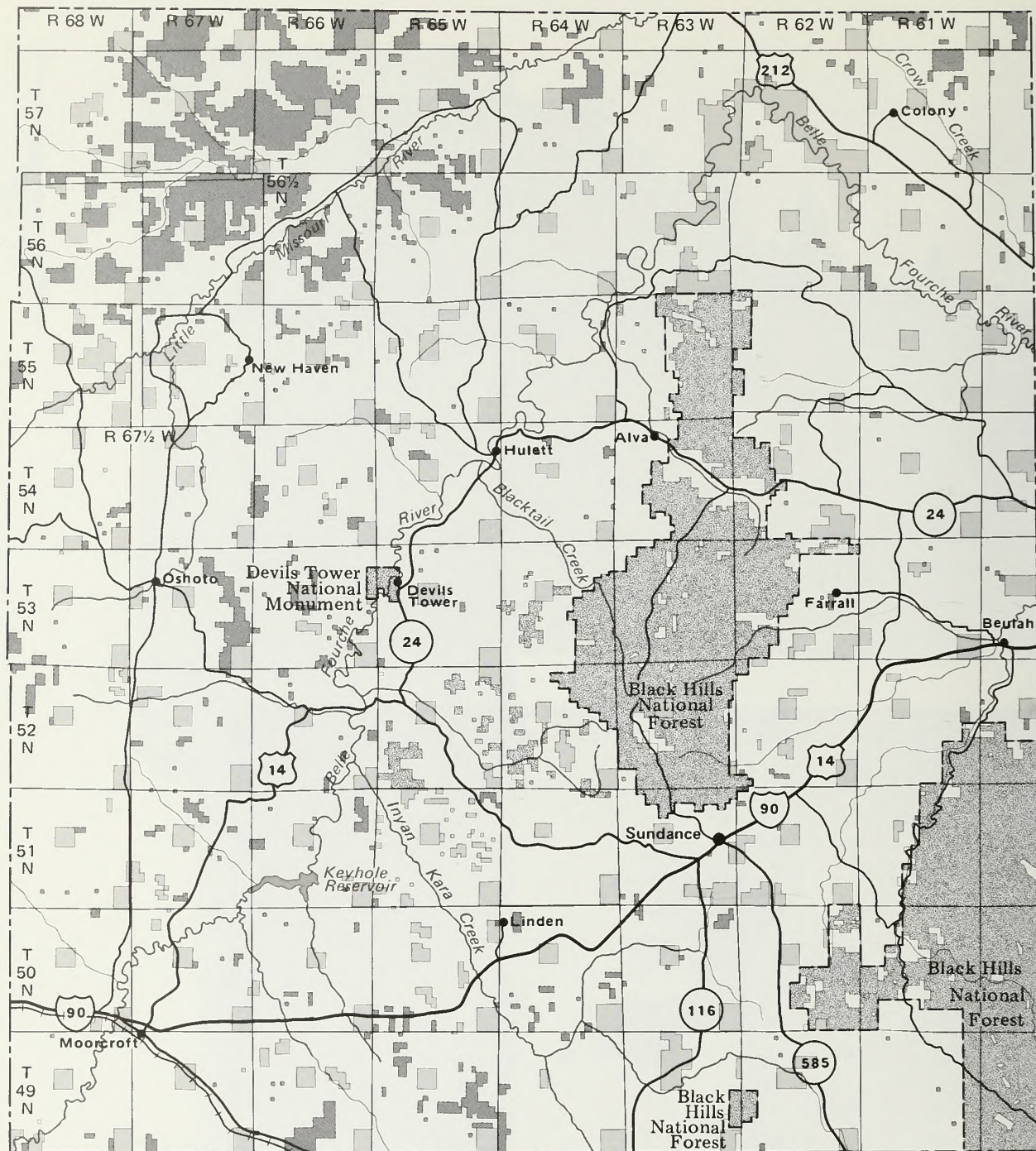
General Location Map





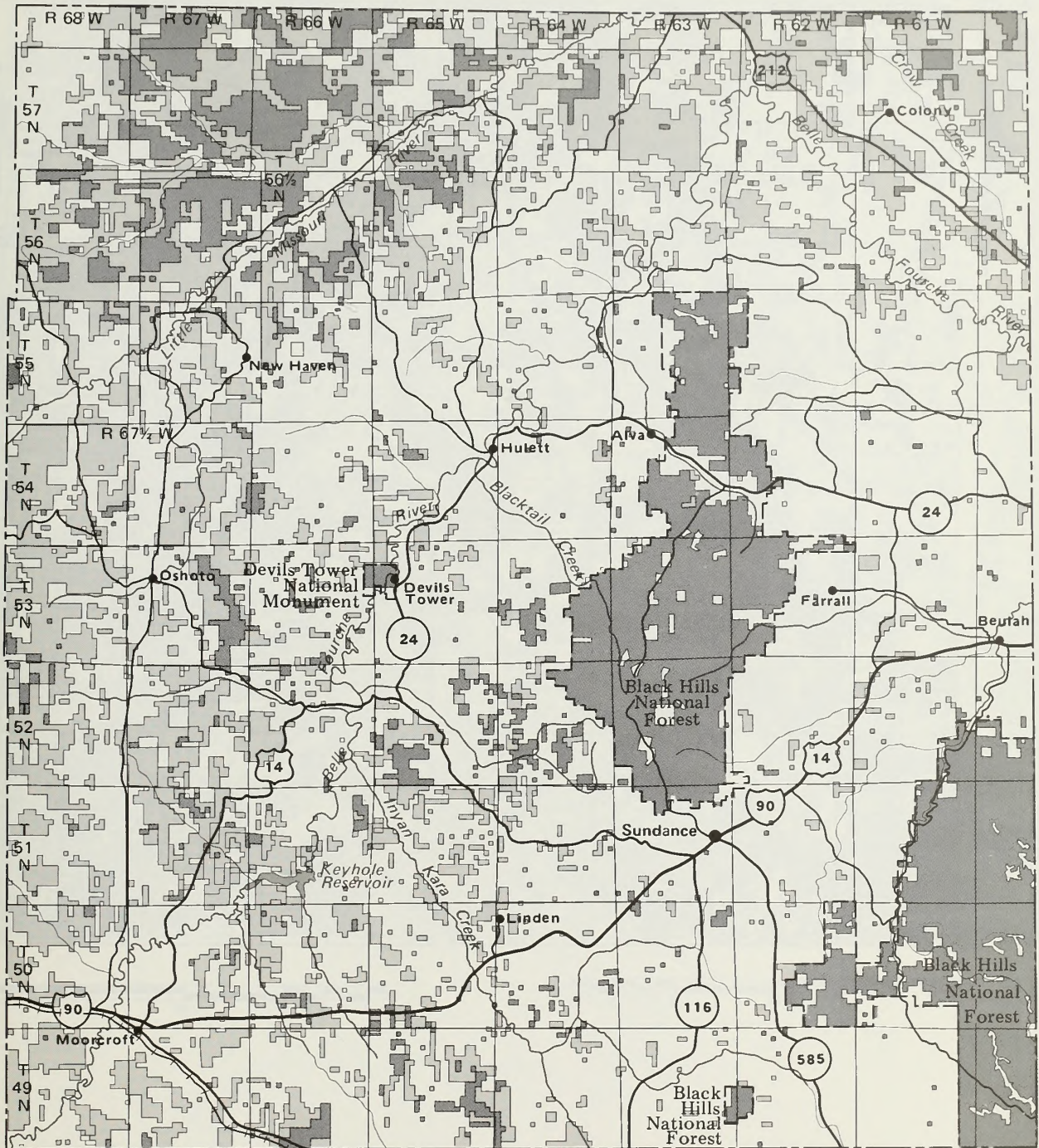
Map 1

Surface Ownership—Crook County

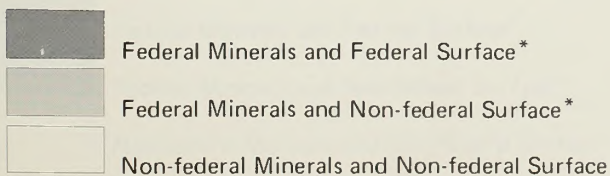


- Public Land Administered by BLM
- National Forest Service
- State Land
- Private Land

Map 2 Mineral Ownership—Crook County

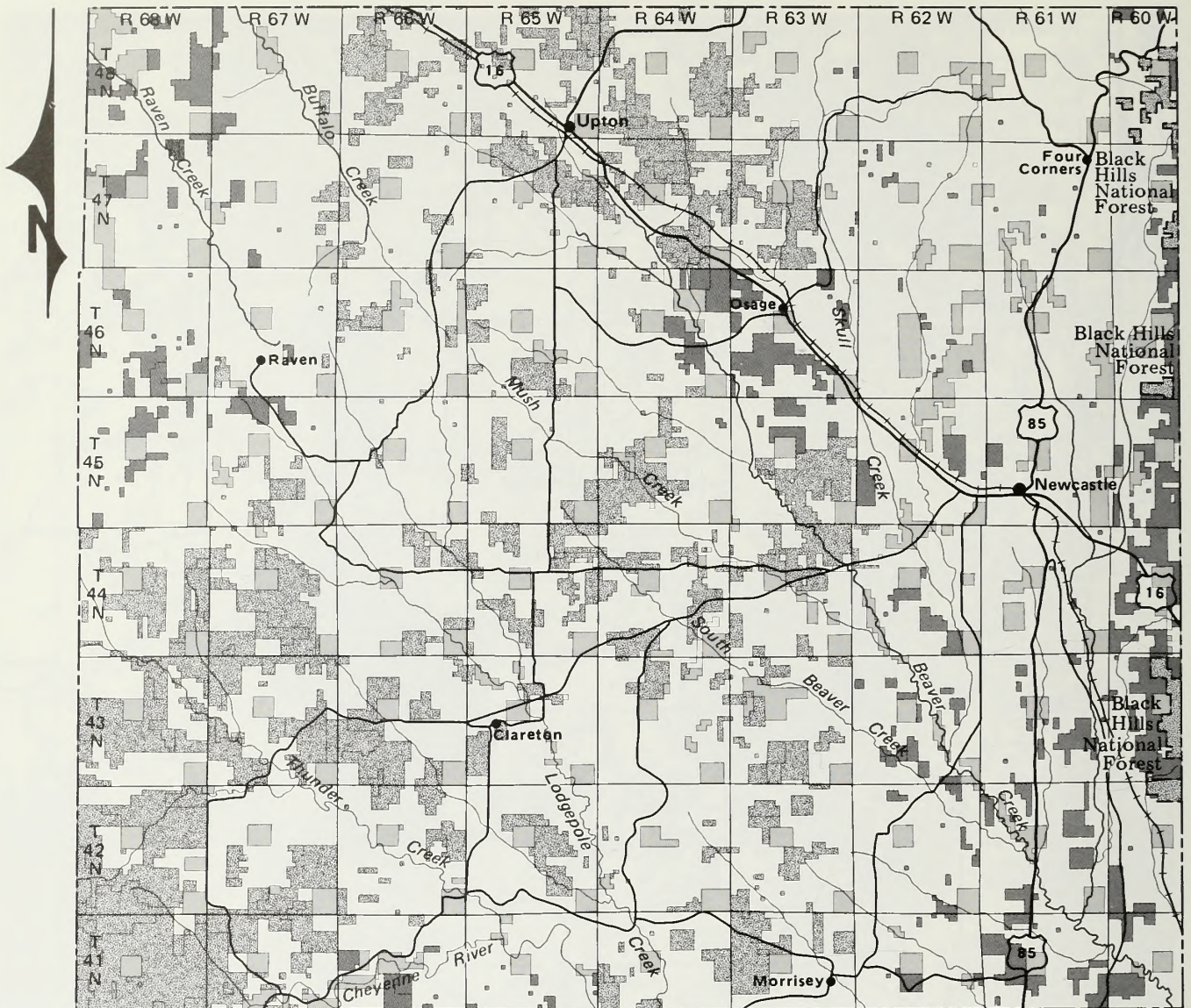


0 5 10 20 MILES



*All or part of the mineral rights are federal. If information about the exact mineral holdings is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

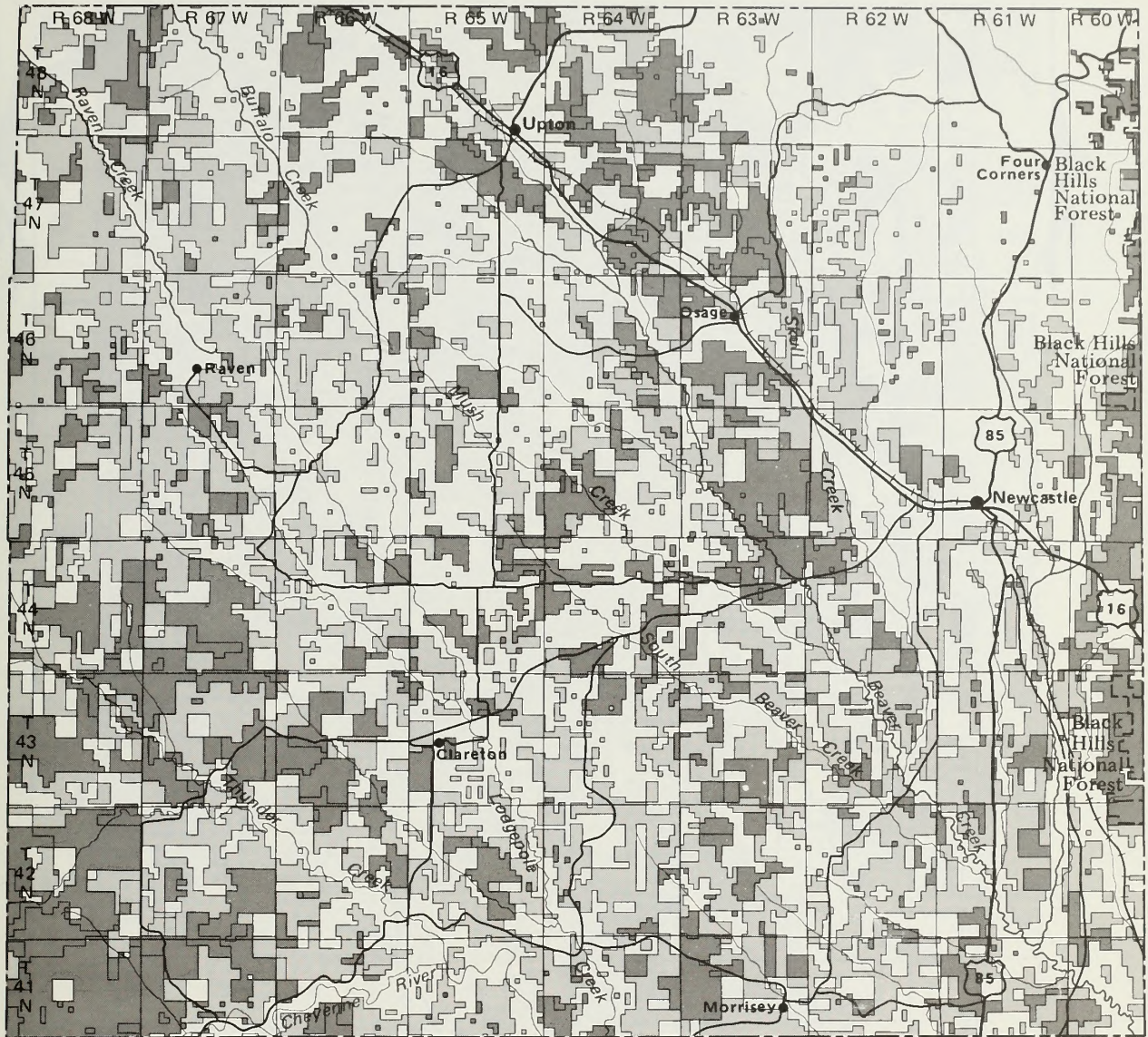
Map 3 **Surface Ownership—Weston County**



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Map 4 Mineral Ownership—Weston County

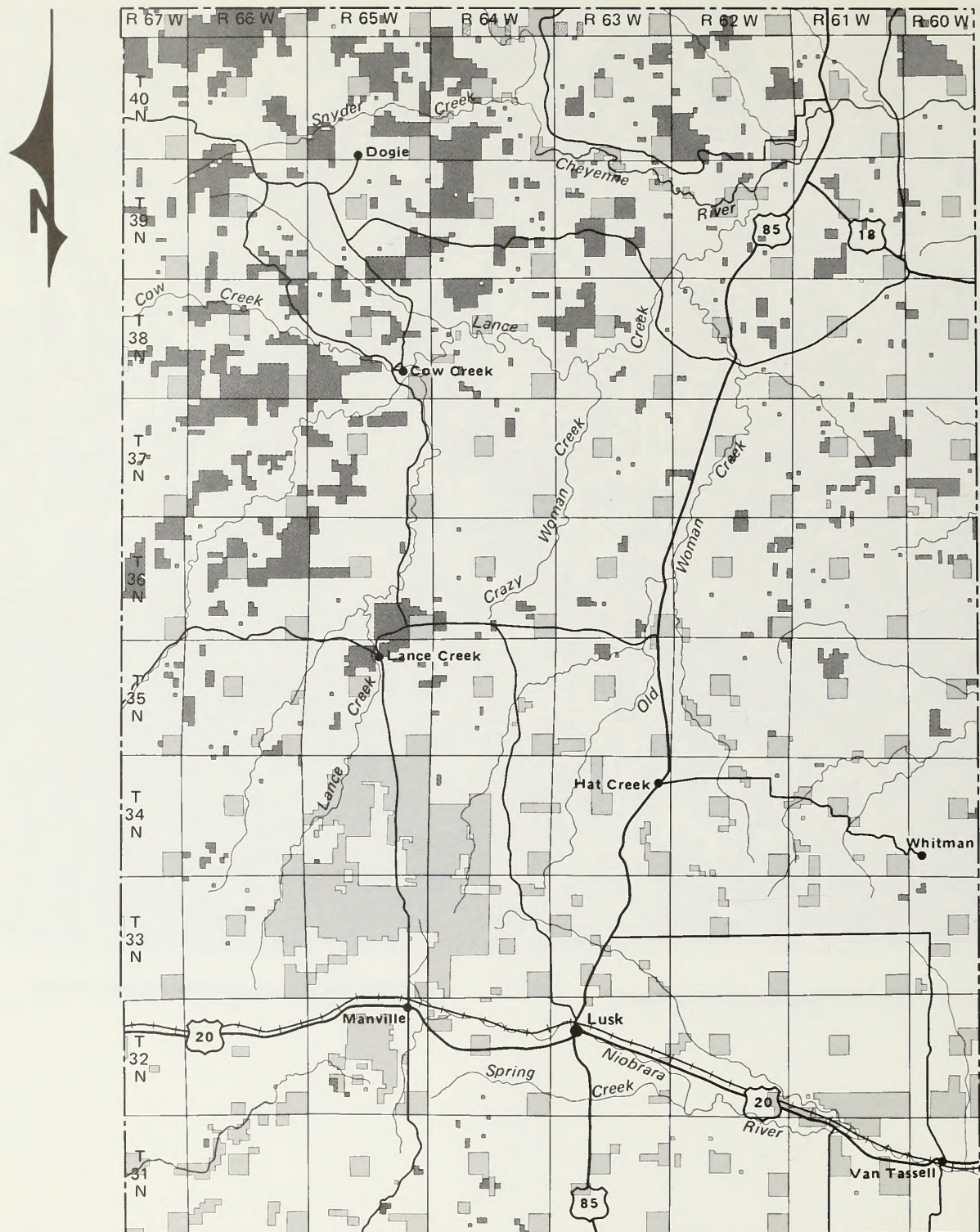


0 1 2 3 4 5 10 20 MILES

- Federal Minerals and Federal Surface*
- Federal Minerals and Non-federal Surface*
- Non-federal Minerals and Non-federal Surface

*All or part of the mineral rights are federal. If Information about the exact mineral holdings is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

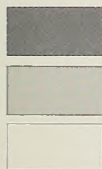
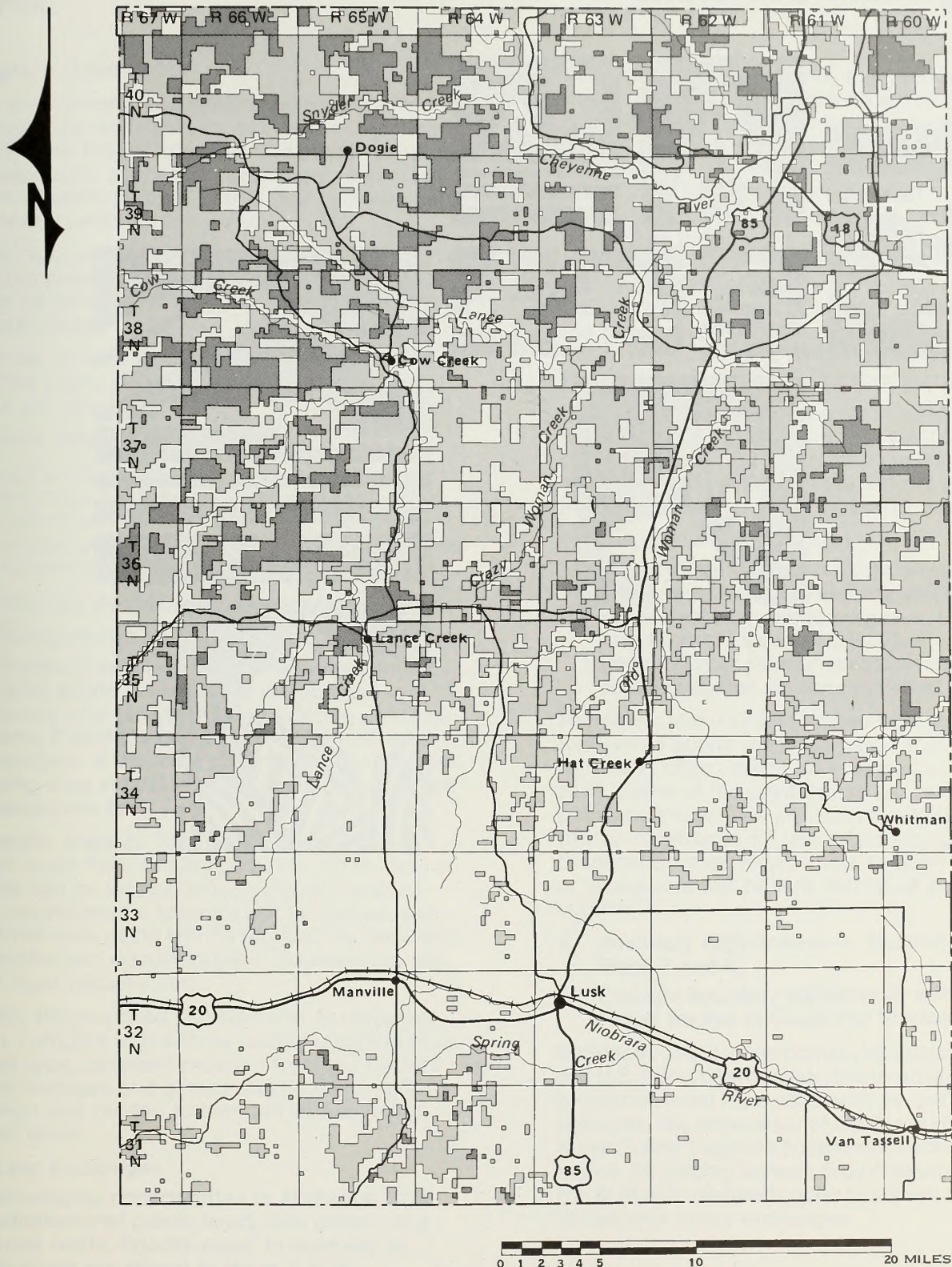
Map 5 Surface Ownership—Niobrara County



- Public Land Administered by BLM
- National Forest Service
- State Land
- Private Land

0 1 2 3 4 5 10 20 MILES

Map 6 Mineral Ownership—Niobrara County



Federal Minerals and Federal Surface*

Federal Minerals and Non-federal Surface*

Non-federal Minerals and Non-federal Surface

*All or part of the mineral rights are federal. If information about the exact mineral holdings is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

Management Decisions



Lands

Program Description

The lands program supports other BLM resource management activities, as well as those of local, state, other federal agencies and private uses. It includes such actions as: exchanges, sales, recreation or public purpose grants, rights-of-way and temporary permits for a variety of uses.

Lands with unusual values can be designated for specific purposes. Examples are withdrawal of lands for preservation of wilderness, cultural or historic values.

BLM can provide land for community expansion or other public purposes such as county or city parks and landfills.

Multiple Use Objectives

Manage public lands to maintain a quality environment, help meet the public's need for lands and resources, and to contribute to the stability and orderly growth of dependent users, industries and communities.

Multiple Use Decisions

1. Transportation and Transmission Rights-of-Way

Rights-of-way applicants on BLM administered public lands will be encouraged to locate new facilities along existing rights-of-way, if feasible based on an environmental analysis. If the local governments in the planning area establish utility corridors, BLM will cooperate fully.

Rationale: Impacts from existing facilities on public lands have already occurred. When new facilities can be located along existing rights-of-way, environmental impacts will be limited, and administrative costs will be reduced because site inspection and documentation requirements will be at least partially met.

Initially the proposed decision was to establish utility corridors in the three county planning area. Based upon comment received from the County Commissioners and general public the proposed decision was revised to conform with existing county plans.

2. Land Exchanges

Investigate opportunities to exchange BLM administered public lands with private and state lands. Priority areas to consider exchanges are shown in Maps 7, 8, 9.

Rationale: The Secretary of the Interior has identified a number of objectives on which the BLM is to concentrate its efforts over the next four years. One of these objectives is to adjust land ownership patterns to enhance manageability of federal lands. The fragmented land ownership pattern in Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties creates opportunities for public/private land exchanges of benefit to both parties. Intensive management and improvements are more efficient on contiguous tracts of land. A number of landowners in the Newcastle Resource Area have expressed a desire for exchanging land with BLM to similarly improve the management of their lands.

BLM is interested in exchanges that provide more efficient management, offer more public use, or provide greater protection for valuable public resources. Land exchanges are strictly voluntary and are conducted on an equal value basis.

3. Disposal of Small Tracts

Identify small isolated tracts of public land which have minimal resource value and are not suitable for public purposes. Dispose of these tracts through exchanges (see Lands Decision 2) or through public sales, if exchanges cannot be accomplished.

Rationale: Many small isolated tracts of BLM administered public land may have little resource value and often cannot be managed efficiently by BLM. Some of the small tracts are valuable for public purposes (see Decision 5) and those tracts will be considered for use by public agencies. Disposal of other small tracts through exchange or public sale will benefit both BLM and the public.

4. Boundary Adjustments — BLM/USFS (See Maps 7 and 8)

Evaluate boundary adjustments with the U.S. Forest Service in Crook and Weston counties.

Rationale: Small areas containing adjacent BLM and U.S. Forest Service administered lands could be administered more efficiently by one of the agencies. The Supervisor of the Black Hills National Forest supports possible boundary adjustments. All grazing lessees and other interests in the BLM administered public lands will be contacted prior to any exchanges.

5. Lands for Public Purposes

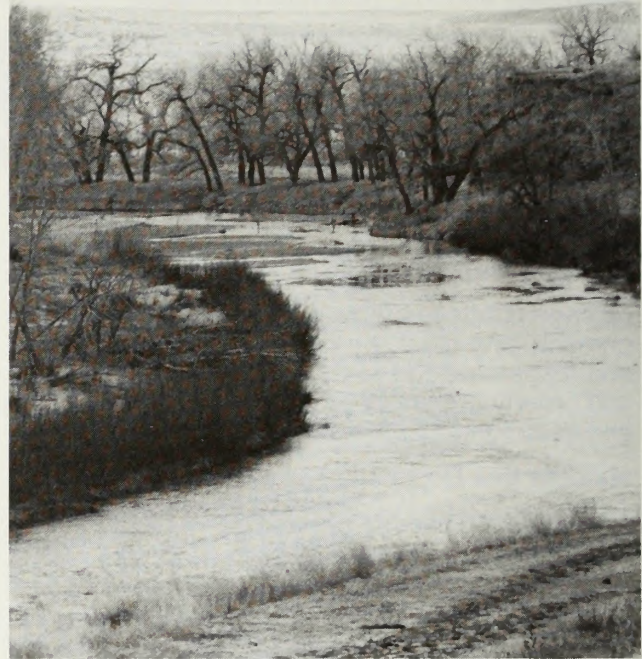
Process the following proposals concerning use of BLM lands for public purposes:

- a. **Sanitary land fill site for the city of Newcastle (See Map 8).**
T. 44 N., R. 61 E., Section 15, NW ¼ NE ¼
- b. **Fire station for the community of Lance Creek (See Map 9).**
T. 35 N., R. 65 W., Section 3, Lot 59

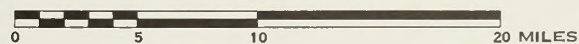
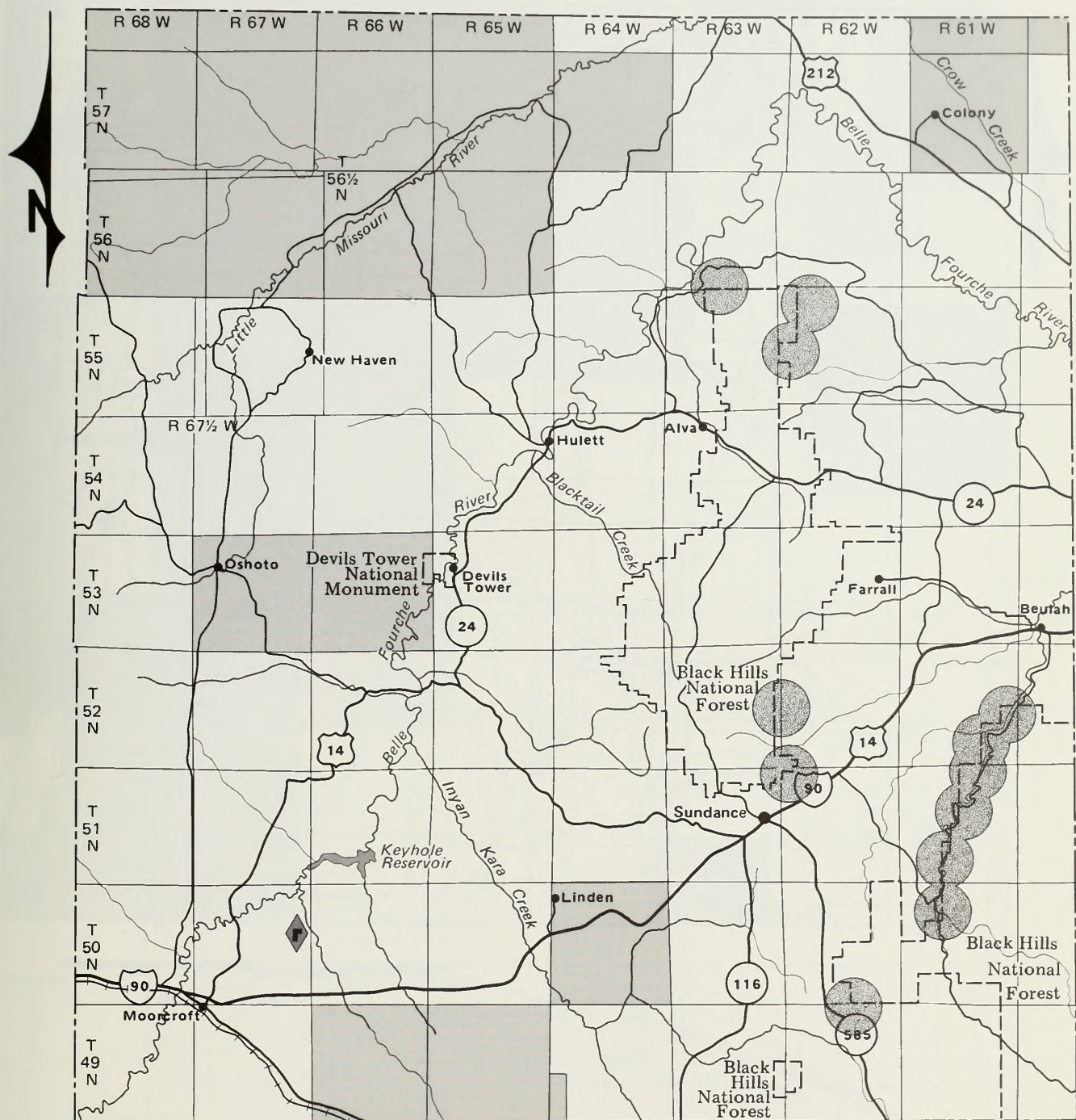
Rationale: The city of Newcastle and Lance Creek community have identified these sites for public purposes. Since 1926, with passage of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, BLM has transferred public lands to other federal, state, county and city governments and private entities for public purposes.



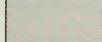
Landowners adjoining the potential Newcastle landfill site have indicated opposition to the proposal. Continued processing of the cities application will require additional public contact and hearings prior to a final decision.

In addition to the sites listed above, a sanitary landfill site was identified by the Pine Haven Service and Improvement District. Recently the site was determined unsuitable because of its proximity to an airport runway. BLM will consider alternative sites with the Crook County Commissioners.



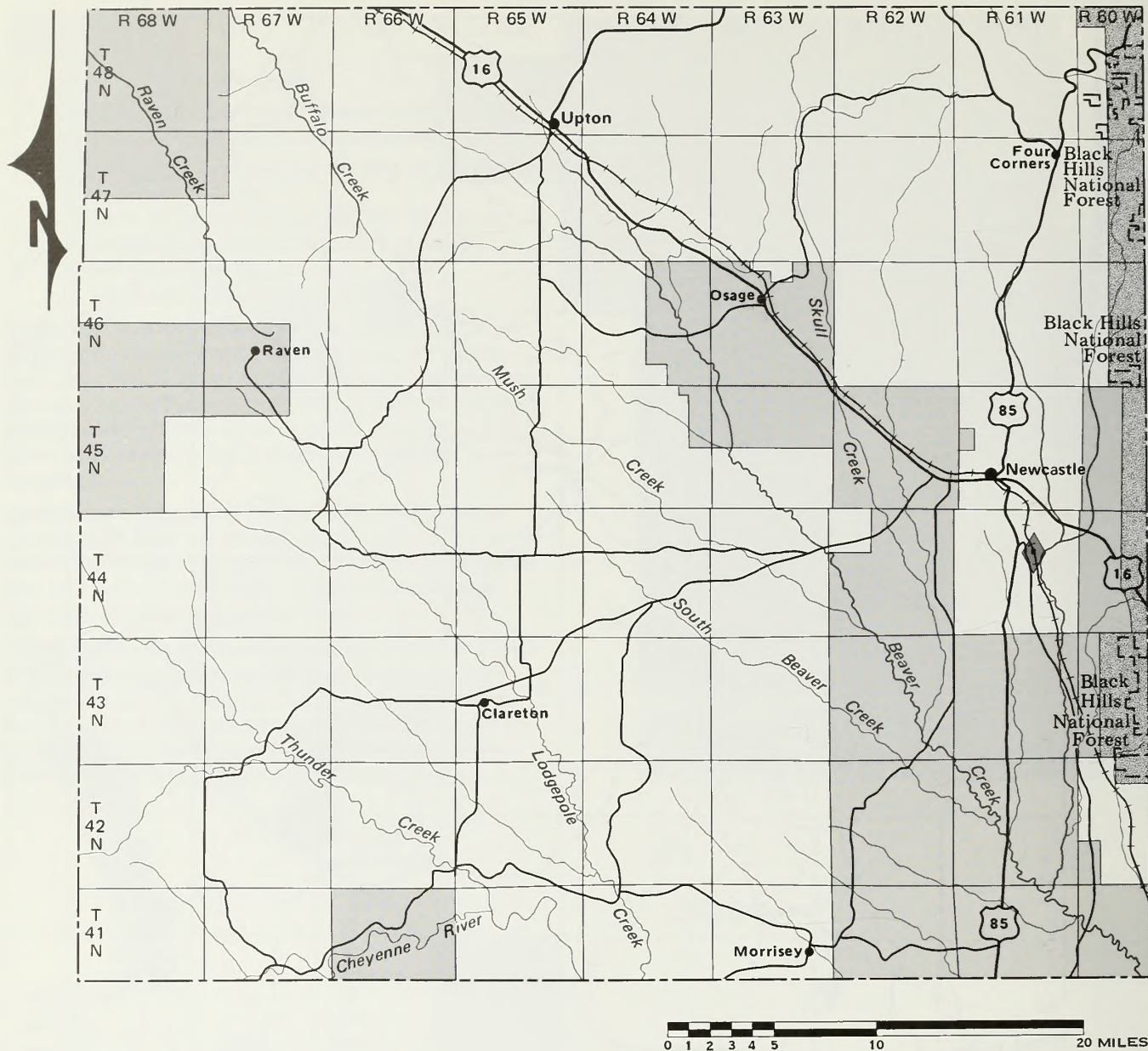
Map 7 Land Transfers—Crook County






-  BLM Lands Available for Pine Haven Sanitary Landfill Site*
-  Proposed Boundary Adjustments with USFS
-  Area where BLM/Private Land Exchanges Will be Considered

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

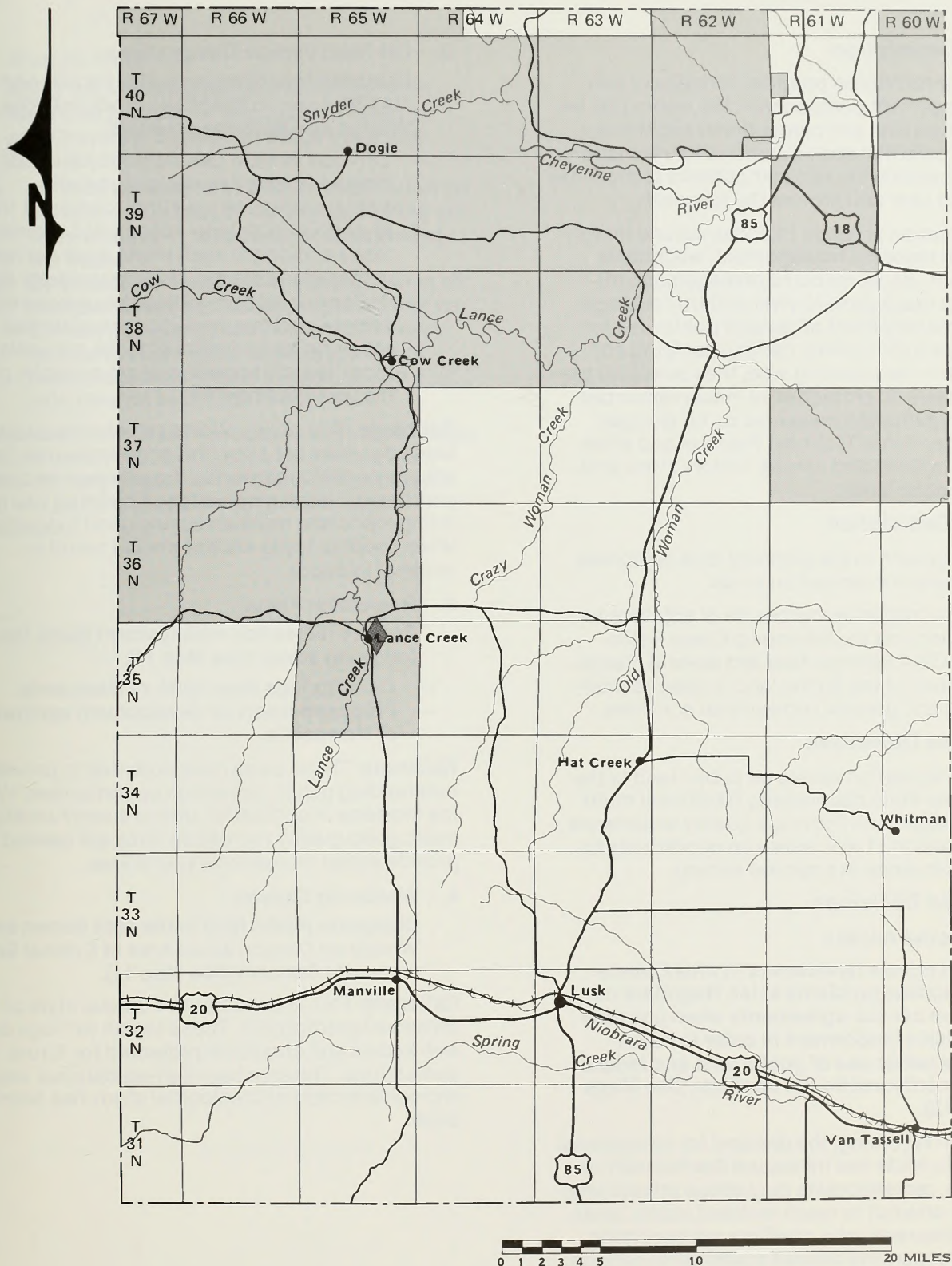
Map 8 **Land Transfers—Weston County**





-  BLM Lands Available for Newcastle Sanitary Landfill Site*
-  Proposed Boundary Adjustments with USFS
-  Area where BLM/Private Land Exchanges Will be Considered

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

Map 9 Land Transfers—Niobrara County



-  BLM Lands Available for Lance Creek Fire Station *
-  Area where BLM/Private Land Exchanges Will be Considered

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

Recreation

Program Description

The outdoor recreation program consists of two basic management components: the visitor (his behavior, motivations and perceptions) and the resource (its potential and limitations for recreation). BLM must balance the two components to meet the needs of the user and protect the resource.

BLM's recreation program includes natural history and cultural resource management, wilderness management, visual resource management, off-road vehicle management, river and trail management, and management of general public use for activities such as hunting, fishing, camping and hiking. Within the planning area, the recreation program emphasis is: protection of visual resources through rehabilitation measures on oil and gas leases; protection of National Register and other significant cultural and natural history sites; and, access to public lands.

Resource Description

Population growth in the planning area is increasing the demand for recreation areas.

Important recreation resources on or adjacent to public land include the Whoop-up Creek Petroglyphs, the Cave Springs Area and several historical trails. Much of the public land is used for hunting, fishing and general recreational activities.

Multiple Use Objectives

Protect the recreation values on public land in the planning area while maintaining traditional multiple use management. Provide a quality experience for the recreationist who seeks an opportunity to use the public lands in a natural setting.

Multiple Use Decisions

1. Cooperative Access

Contact private landowners in areas where public access problems exist. Negotiate cooperative access agreements when possible with private landowners in order to better manage public use of public land and reduce landowner/recreationist conflicts (See Maps 10, 11, 12).

Rationale: In Wyoming, the demand for recreational use of public lands has increased dramatically. In some cases, recreationists may abuse private property in their attempt to reach isolated public lands. Landowner/recreationist conflicts are becoming common. Cooperative access agreements provide a method for alleviating such conflicts.

2. Off-Road Vehicle Designations

Establish the following policy for off-road vehicle (ORV) use on the public lands in Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties:

- Off-road vehicle use on public lands is limited to existing roads and trails.
- Vehicle travel off existing roads and trails is permitted only to accomplish necessary tasks and only if such travel does not result in resource damage. Necessary tasks are defined as work requiring the use of a motor vehicle, and may include such activities as repairing range improvements, minerals exploration, or if conditions are suitable, picking up big game kills.

Rationale: This policy allows vehicle use on public lands but does not allow indiscriminate use. Vehicle use on the public lands is a privilege and can be continued if done responsibly. Confining use to existing roads and trails and using good judgement when roads or trails are wet should result in minimal impacts.

3. Recreation Plans

Prepare recreation management plans for the following areas: (See Map 11).

- Cave Springs Area north of Newcastle.
- Proposed reservoir development northwest of Newcastle.

Rationale: These areas have potential to provide outstanding public recreation opportunities. With the increase in population due to energy development, good quality recreation sites are needed to provide varied recreation experiences.

4. Whoop-Up Canyon

Designate public land in the area known as Whoop-up Canyon as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (See Map 11).

Rationale: This area contains a unique style of well preserved petroglyphs. These Indian writings are well known and should be protected for future generations. The area has high educational value and considerable archeological study has been done.

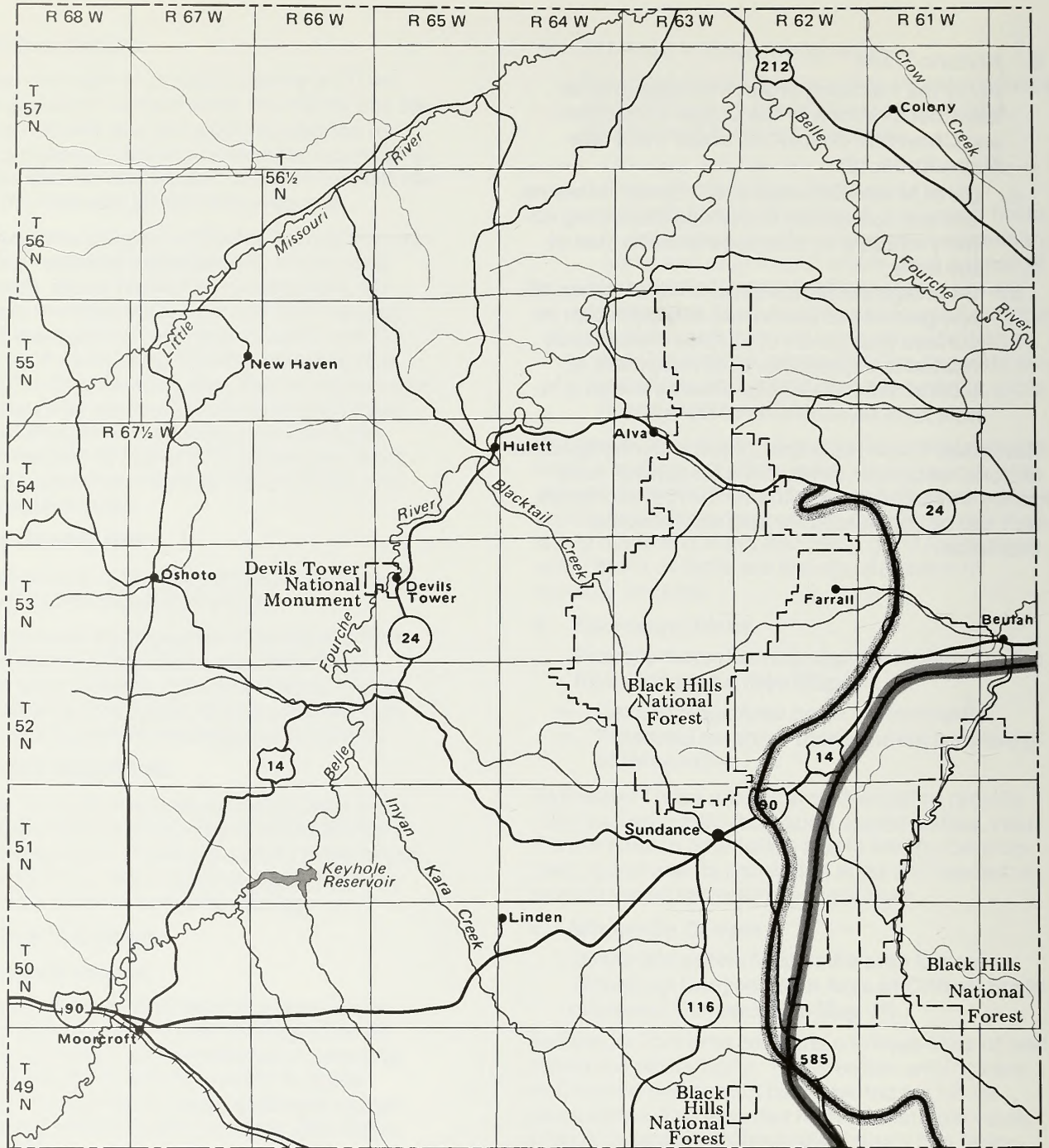
5. Historic Trails

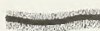

Apply the following protective measures to identified portions of the Custer Expedition and Cheyenne Deadwood Stage trails (see Maps 10, 11, 12):

- a. On BLM administered public lands - allow no surface occupancy or surface disturbing activity within a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile zone on each side of the trails.**
- b. On private surface/federal mineral - when oil and gas leases are issued, stipulate that no surface occupancy or surface disturbance related to exploration or development of federal minerals will be allowed within a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile zone on each side of the trails.**

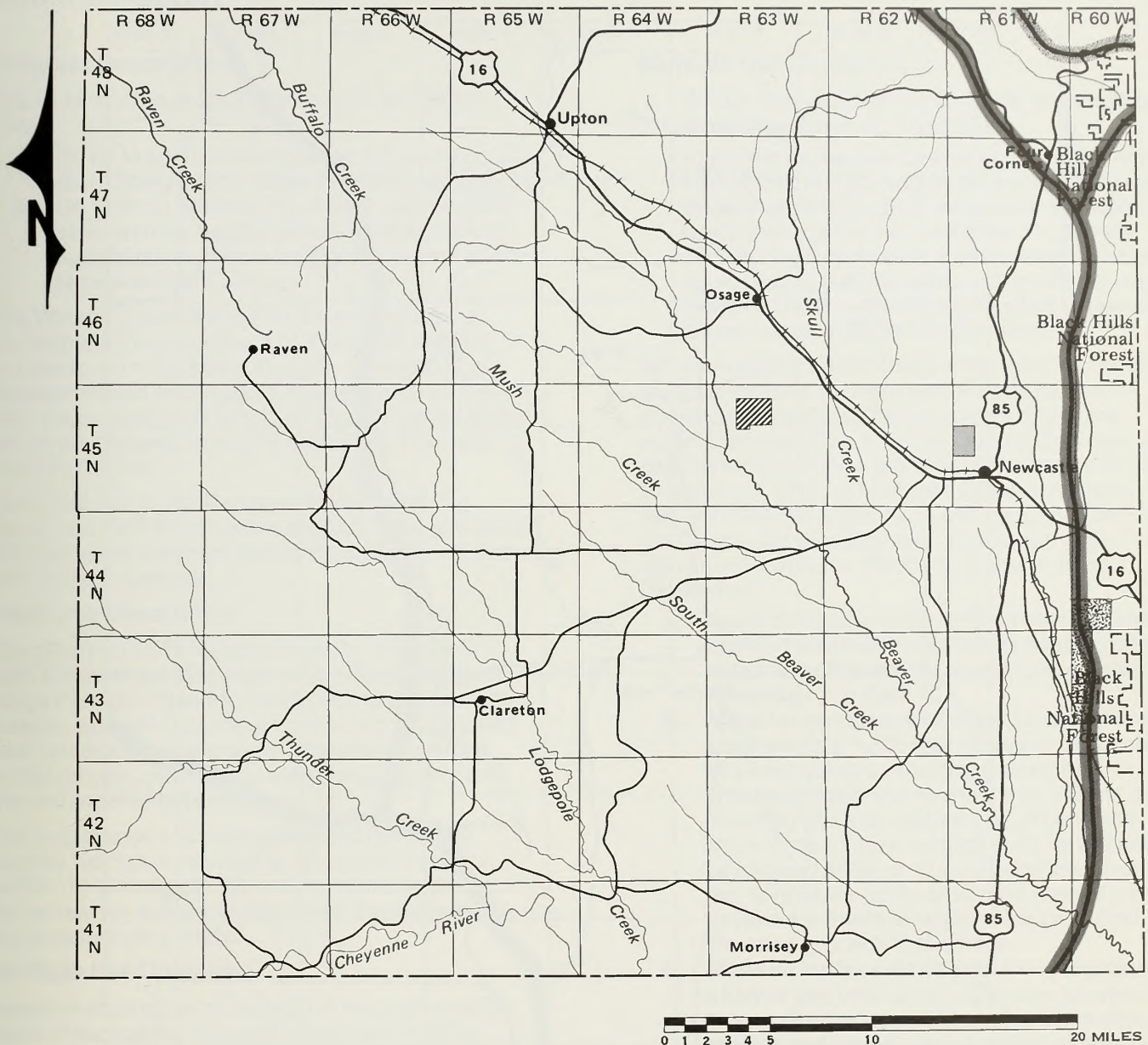
Rationale: These trails are unique and irreplaceable historic resources. Limitations on surface occupancy will help preserve them. The historic Texas trail will be considered for similar protective measures.






Map 10 Historic Trails—Crook County



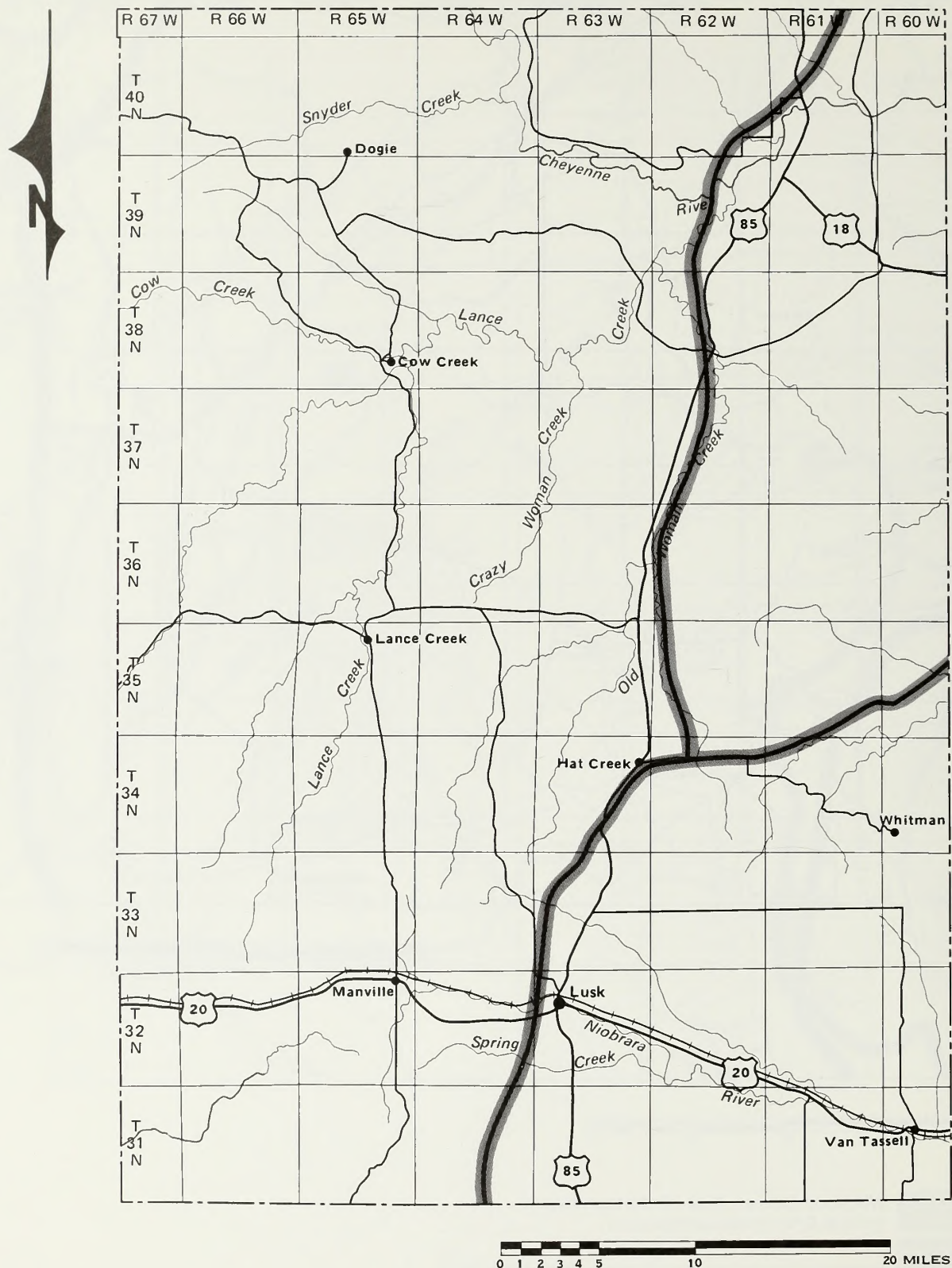
-  Custer Expedition
-  Cheyenne Black Hills Stage Route

Map 11 Recreation Areas, Historic Trails and Area of Critical Environmental Concern—Weston County



-  Whoopup Canyon Area (Designate Area of Critical Environmental Concern)
-  Reservoir-Recreation Area (Prepare Recreation Plan)
-  Cave Spring Recreation Site (Prepare Recreation Plan)
-  Custer Expedition
-  Cheyenne Black Hills Stage Route

Map 12 Historic Trails—Niobrara County



Wildlife Habitat

Program Description

The BLM wildlife program has two major objectives:

- a. On BLM administered public lands - to protect, develop and manage wildlife habitat.
- b. On Federal Mineral/Private Surface - to consider wildlife habitat protection when BLM authorizes exploration or development of federal mineral estate.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is responsible for management of the actual wildlife populations in the State. The only exceptions are threatened and endangered species such as the bald eagle, peregrine falcon and black-footed ferret which are the responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

BLM relies on consultation with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify habitat, its importance, and protective measures.

Resource Description

The planning unit includes a variety of habitats with a diverse wildlife population. These habitats range from grassland to sagebrush to coniferous forests. Species include elk, mule and white-tailed deer, antelope, sage grouse, sharptailed grouse, ruffed grouse, wild turkey, waterfowl, raptors and the endangered bald eagle.

The importance of both aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitat is increasing. Population growth within the planning area and the resulting demand for recreation and urban land uses places increasing pressure on wildlife.

Multiple Use Objective

Maintain existing wildlife habitat through development of habitat management plans and reduce adverse impacts on wildlife habitat resulting from multiple-use activities.

Multiple Use Decisions

1. **Winter Range, Strutting Grounds and Nesting areas (See Maps 13, 14 and 15)**

Apply the protective measures listed below to both public lands and private surface/federal mineral estate. On BLM administered public lands they apply to all activities. On private surface/federal mineral estate, the restrictions apply *only* to mineral exploration and development activities and will be attached to leases issued for oil and gas development.

When oil and gas activities are involved, exceptions or modifications to these restrictions can be requested by private surface owner or driller and authorized in writing from the District Engineer of the Geological Survey with the concurrence of the BLM Casper District Manager. When other activities are involved, exceptions can be authorized by the Casper District Manager. All exceptions will be coordinated with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

- a. **Restrict mineral exploration, development and disturbances on antelope concentration areas and critical deer winter ranges from November 1 to April 30.**
- b. **Allow no occupancy or other surface disturbance within a 1,320-foot radius of the center of a sage grouse strutting ground (lek). In order to protect the nesting area around the strutting ground, exploration, drilling and other mineral development activity will not be allowed within a 1 ¾ mile distance from the ¼-mile lek protection zone from March 1 to June 15. Route all rights-of-way around strutting grounds if possible.**
- c. **Allow no surface disturbance or occupancy within a one mile radius of known sharptail grouse dancing grounds during the mating, nesting and brood rearing period of March 1 to June 15 each year. Allow no surface disturbance or occupancy within 250 yards of the dancing grounds at any time of the year.**
- d. **Designate buffer zones around active golden eagle and prairie falcon nests in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Do not allow surface disturbance activities within the buffer from March 1 to June 30. Similar buffer areas will be established for bald eagle, peregrine falcon and osprey if active nests are located.**

Rationale: There are certain periods during the year which are critical for survival of wildlife. These periods include winter and times for nesting, brooding, fawning, etc. The protective stipulations will help to reduce stress and wildlife losses.

2. Reservoir Fencing

All new reservoirs and existing reservoirs scheduled for maintenance on BLM administered public lands will be evaluated to determine benefits and feasibility of fencing.

Rationale: Reservoir fencing provides benefits for wildlife and livestock. It helps protect waterfowl habitat by maintaining shoreline vegetation and preventing nest disturbance. Water quality is also improved. Water can be piped to a trough outside the fenced area for livestock and big game.

3. Black-Footed Ferret Habitat

Prairie dog control measures on BLM administered public lands will be preceded by an inventory of the colony to determine the presence of black-footed ferrets. BLM will develop procedures to allow control requests and subsequent ferret clearances to be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Rationale: The initial recommendation for prairie dog control was to conduct an inventory of prairie dog colonies and identify high potential ferret habitat on public lands by 1983; then develop a control plan for approved areas.

In order to expedite BLM's response to requests for control actions the decision is to handle them on a case-by-case basis.

Also, during public participation, the public questioned current control procedures and suggested alternative funding and responsibility arrangements. As a result, the Casper District has initiated a request for review of procedures to evaluate other ways to expedite the process.

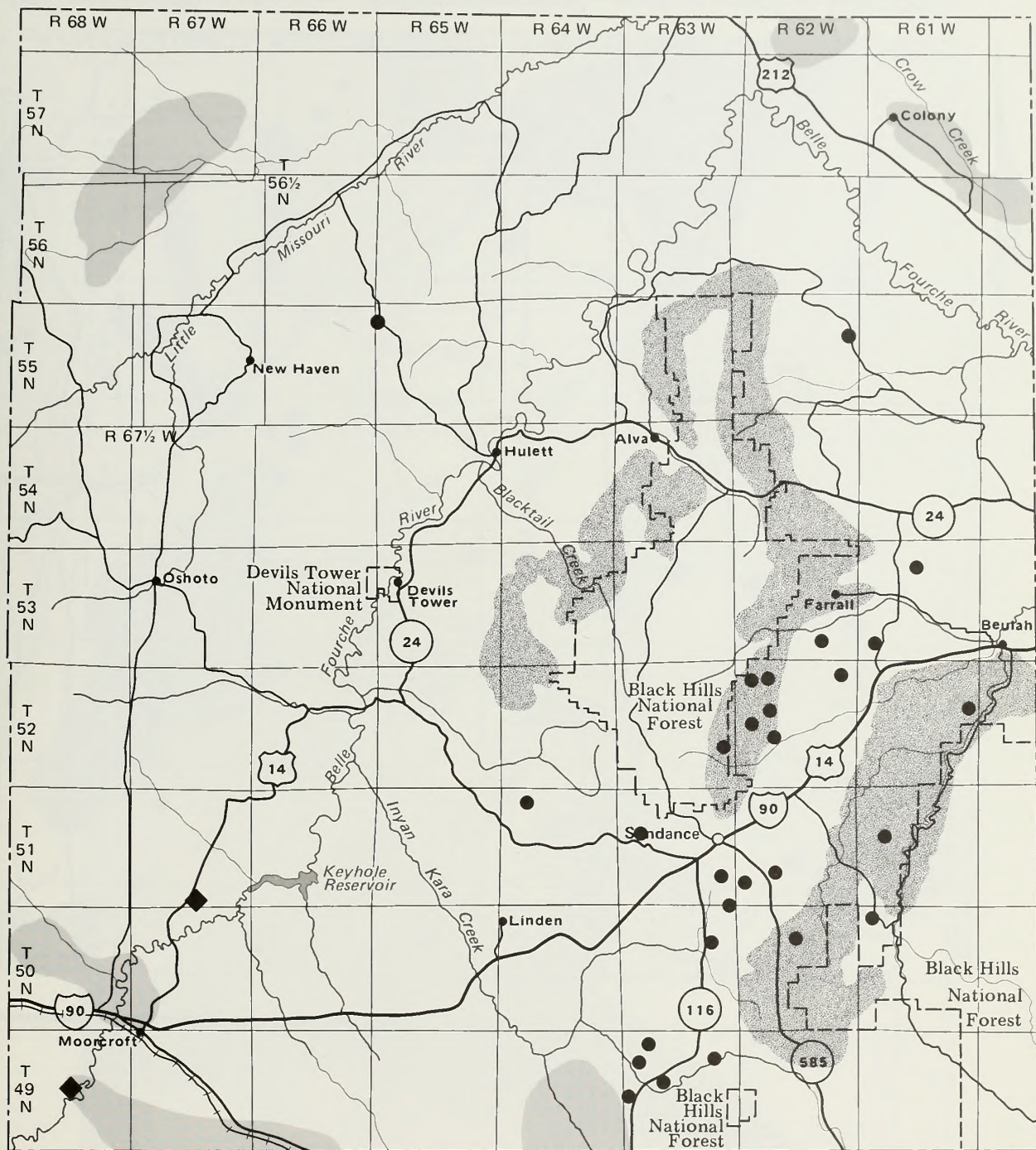
4. Predator Control

Predator control programs on BLM administered lands in the planning area will conform to Department of the Interior policy. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the only agent authorized to approve control on public lands.

Rationale: BLM is required to follow existing Departmental policy on predator control. Public comment indicated reasonable concern on the applicability of existing policy in scattered, small tract public land areas found in Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties. The BLM Casper District has initiated a request for policy review, but must adhere to existing policy in the interim.



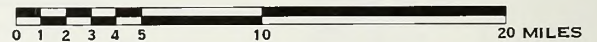
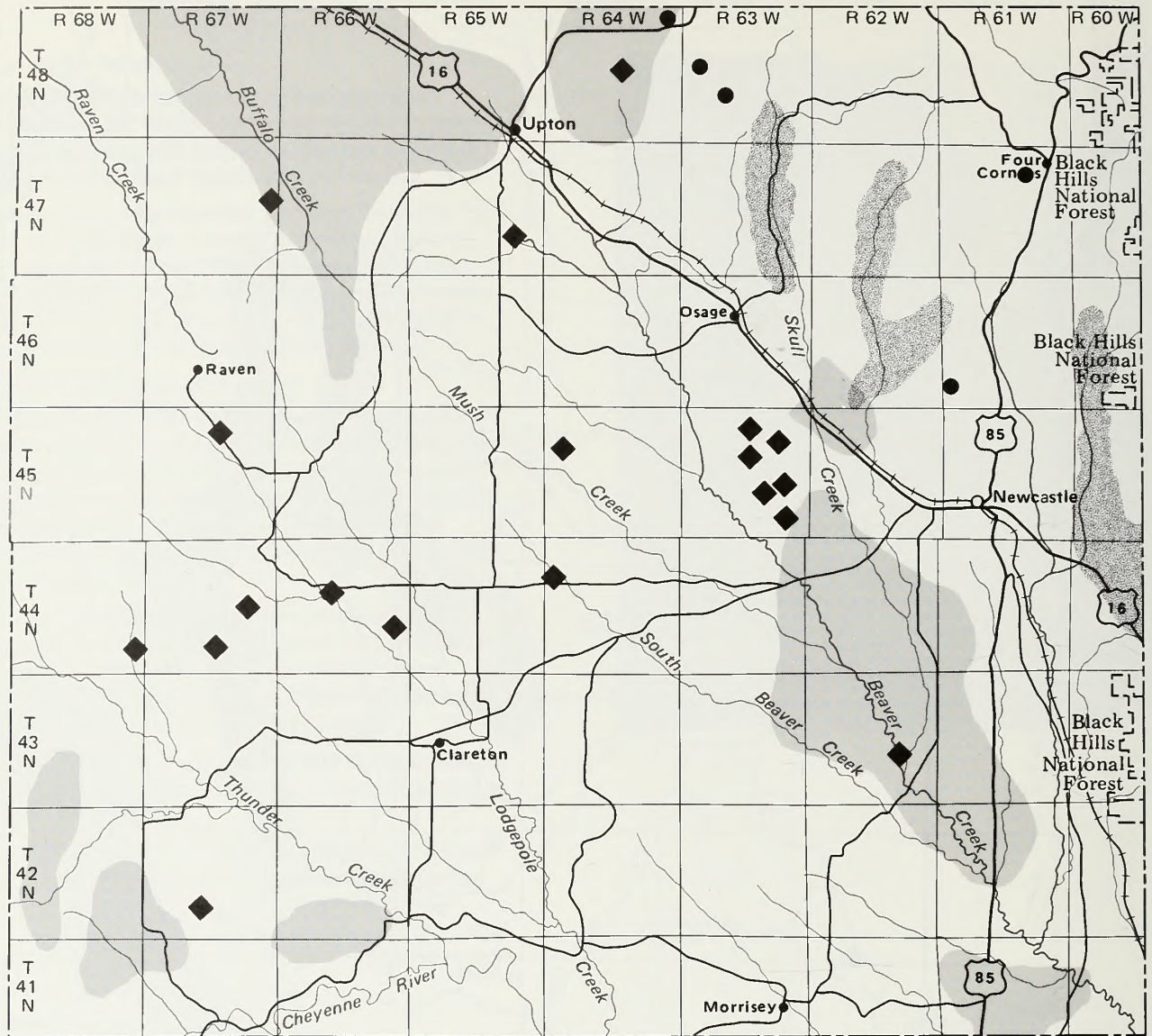
Map 13 Important Wildlife Areas—Crook County



- Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds
- ◆ Sharptail Grouse Dancing Grounds
- Critical Deer Winter Range
- Antelope Concentration Area

Data from Wyoming Game and Fish Department. To illustrate wildlife areas, the total areas are shown without regard to land ownership. Decisions apply only to BLM administered public lands and mineral estate.

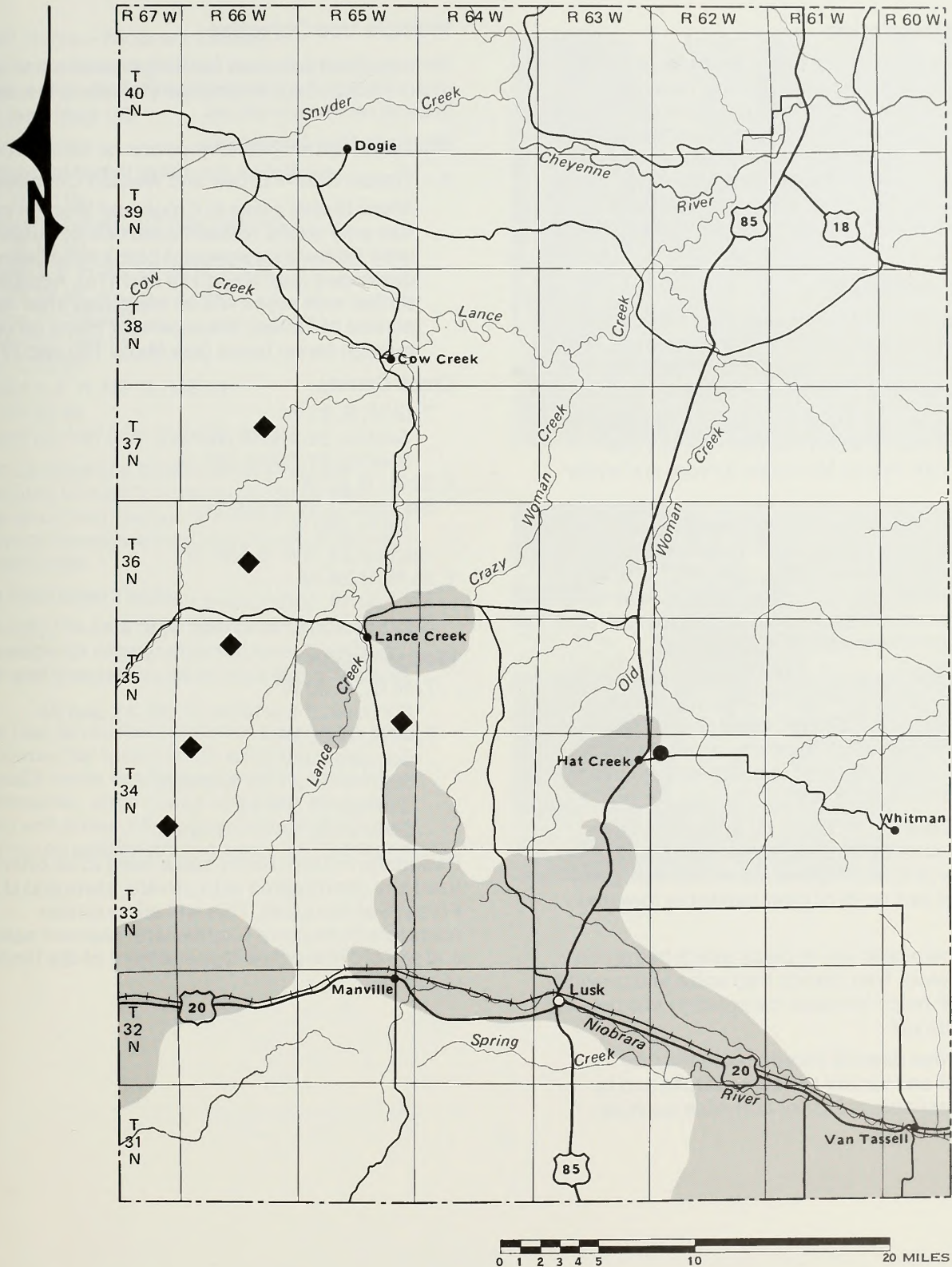
Map 14 Important Wildlife Areas—Weston County



- Sharp-tail Grouse Dancing Grounds
- ◆ Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds
- ▨ Critical Deer Winter Range
- Antelope Concentration Area

Data from Wyoming Game and Fish Department. To illustrate wildlife areas, the total areas are shown without regard to land ownership. Decisions apply only to BLM administered public lands and mineral estate.

Map 15 Important Wildlife Areas—Niobrara County



- Sharptail Grouse Dancing Grounds
- ◆ Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds
- Antelope Concentration Area

Data from Wyoming Game and Fish Department. To illustrate wildlife areas, the total areas are shown without regard to land ownership. Decisions apply only to BLM administered public lands and mineral estate.

Forestry

Program Description

The forestry program includes inventory, evaluation, management and protection of forest resources on BLM administered public lands. The objectives are to produce timber and sustain stands for watershed protection, wildlife habitat and recreation values. BLM conducts sales for timber, posts, poles, firewood and other products, and takes measures to control timber trespass, forest pests and fire.

Resource Description

Forested public lands are concentrated along the Wyoming-South Dakota state line in Weston County. Scattered tracts of forest land are found in Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties.

Ponderosa pine is the only commercial species on the public lands. Noncommercial species are: aspen, bur oak, Rocky Mountain juniper and white spruce.

There are 10,000 acres of BLM administered public lands containing commercial forest in Weston County; 7,600 in Crook County; and 500 in Niobrara County. Commercial forest land is defined as land capable of producing at least 20 cubic feet per acre per year of commercial forest product.

There are 5,500 acres of public land containing non-commercial forest in Weston County; 3,500 in Crook County; and 300 in Niobrara County. Non-commercial forest land is defined as land that will produce less than 20 cubic feet per acre per year of commercial forest product.

All forested public lands are valuable for wildlife habitat and protection of watershed and recreation values. Deer, elk, small game, birds and non-game species find part or all of their habitat in forested areas.

Tree roots help hold soil in place which helps control soil erosion. Tree stands trap snow and provide shade which helps increase percolation and prolong water runoff.

Forested areas directly benefit recreation by adding color and variety to scenic values and by providing desirable areas for activities such as camping and hiking.

Multiple Use Objective

Manage forested areas for timber production while maintaining or enhancing watershed, range, wildlife and recreation values.

Multiple Use Decisions

1. Timber Sale—Crook and Weston Counties

Allow timber sales in Crook and Weston counties only on the following parcels of public land until timber management plans have been developed (see Maps 16a and 17a). Additional timber sale areas will be identified after completion of Timber Management Plans on commercial forest lands (see Maps 16b and 17b).

Crook County

T. 49 N., R. 61 W.

Section 22, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$

Section 27, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$

T. 52 N., R. 61 W.

Section 13, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$;

SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$

Section 24, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$

T. 55 N., R. 66 W.

Section 19, Lots 12 and 13

Section 30, Lot 5; NE NE

Weston County

T. 45 N., R. 60 W.

Portions of Sections 27, 28, 33, and 34

T. 48 N., R. 60 W.

Section 5, Lot 5

Section 6, Lots 8, 9, and 10

Section 17, SW SE

Section 22, Lots 5, 6, and 7

Rationale: Future timber sales need to be prioritized and coordinated with private, state and U.S. Forest Service sales. This will allow timber operators to be more familiar with planned sales and will provide better management of the timber resource.

2. Timber Sales—Niobrara County

Allow timber and vegetative resource sales in Niobrara County only on commercial forest lands (see Map 18).

Allow no sales on noncommercial forest lands. Commercial forest lands are as follows:

- T. 33 N., R. 60 W.
Section 6, SW NE, NE SW, NW SE
- T. 33 N., R. 61 W.
Section 1, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$
- T. 35 N., R. 64 W.
Section 18, SE SW
Section 28, NW SW
- T. 36 N., R. 62 W.
Section 4, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE SE
- T. 37 N., R. 62 W.
Section 22, NW NW, SW SW, SE NE

Rationale: Commercial timber lands produce enough volume to justify removal of the timber. Due to low wood volumes on noncommercial forest land, resource damage would more than offset the value of the timber.

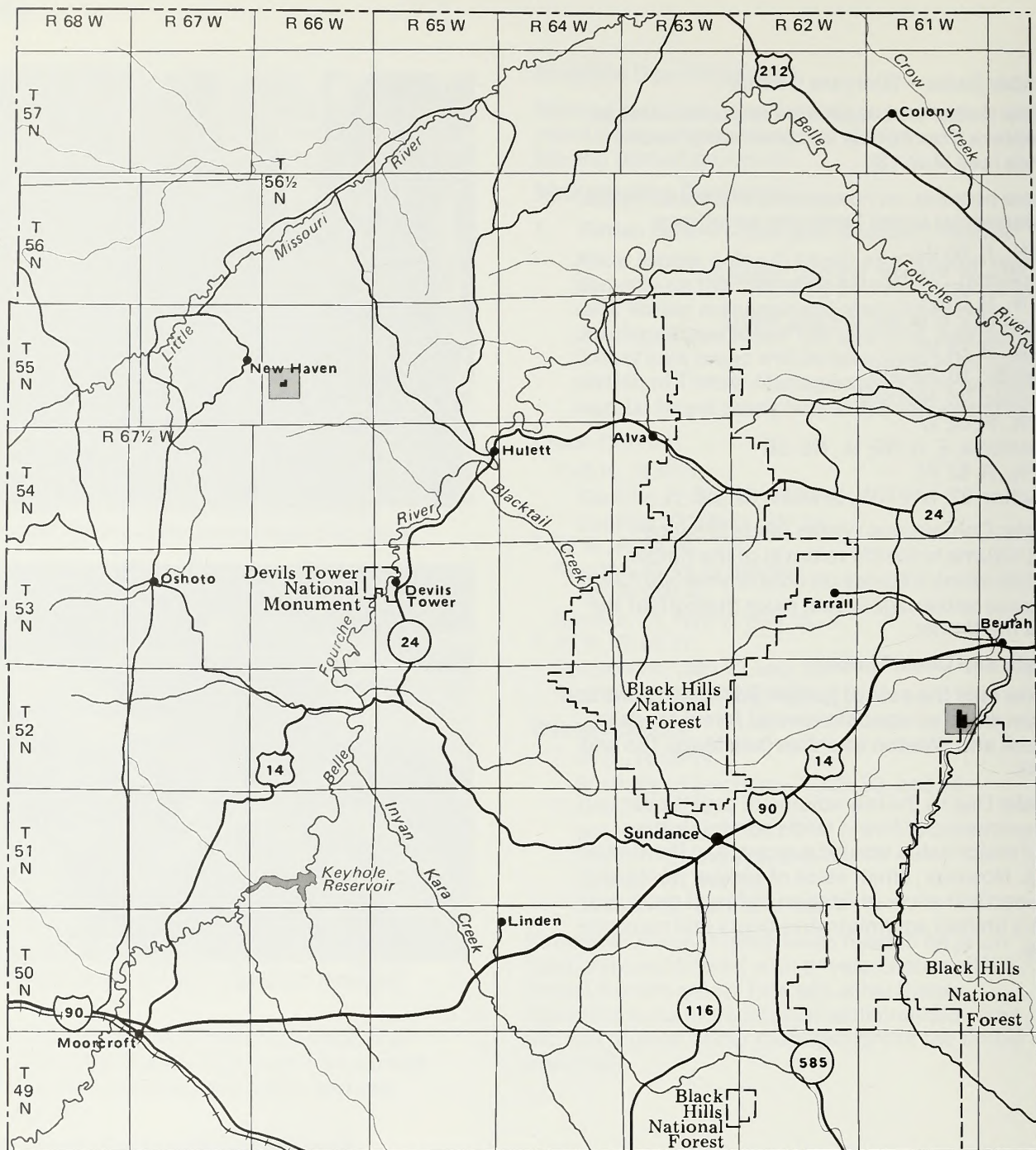
3. Posts and Down Timber

Allow only the sale of juniper posts and dead or down wood on noncommercial forest lands in Crook and Weston counties (see Maps 16c and 17c).

Rationale: Due to the low volume of saw timber on the noncommercial forest lands administrative costs of major sales would be more than the timber is worth. However, small sales of juniper posts and down wood will allow utilization of forest products with only limited administrative costs and resource damage.



Map 16a Timber Sale Areas—Crook County

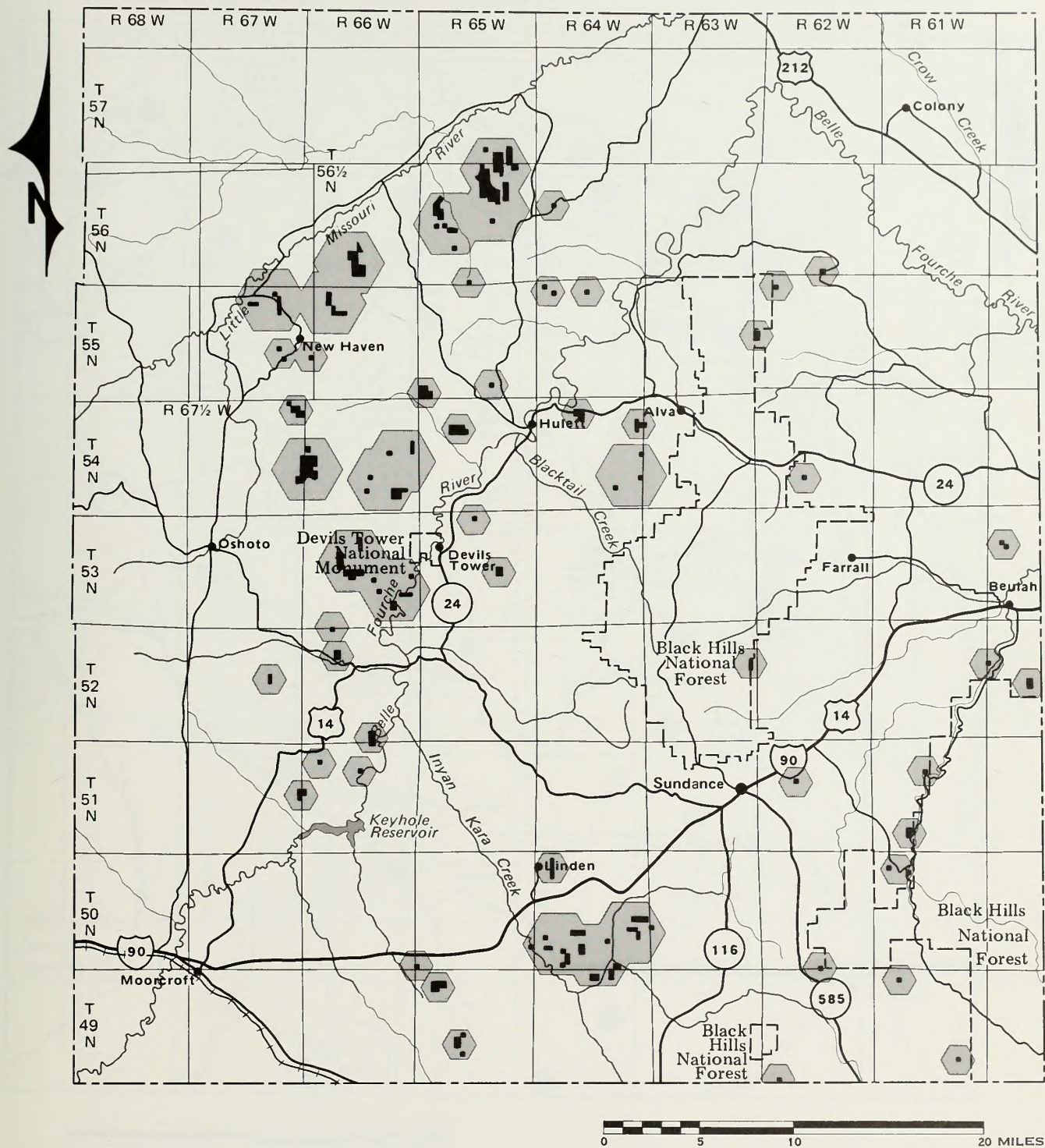



0 5 10 20 MILES

■ Timber Sale Area*

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

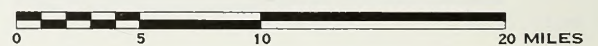
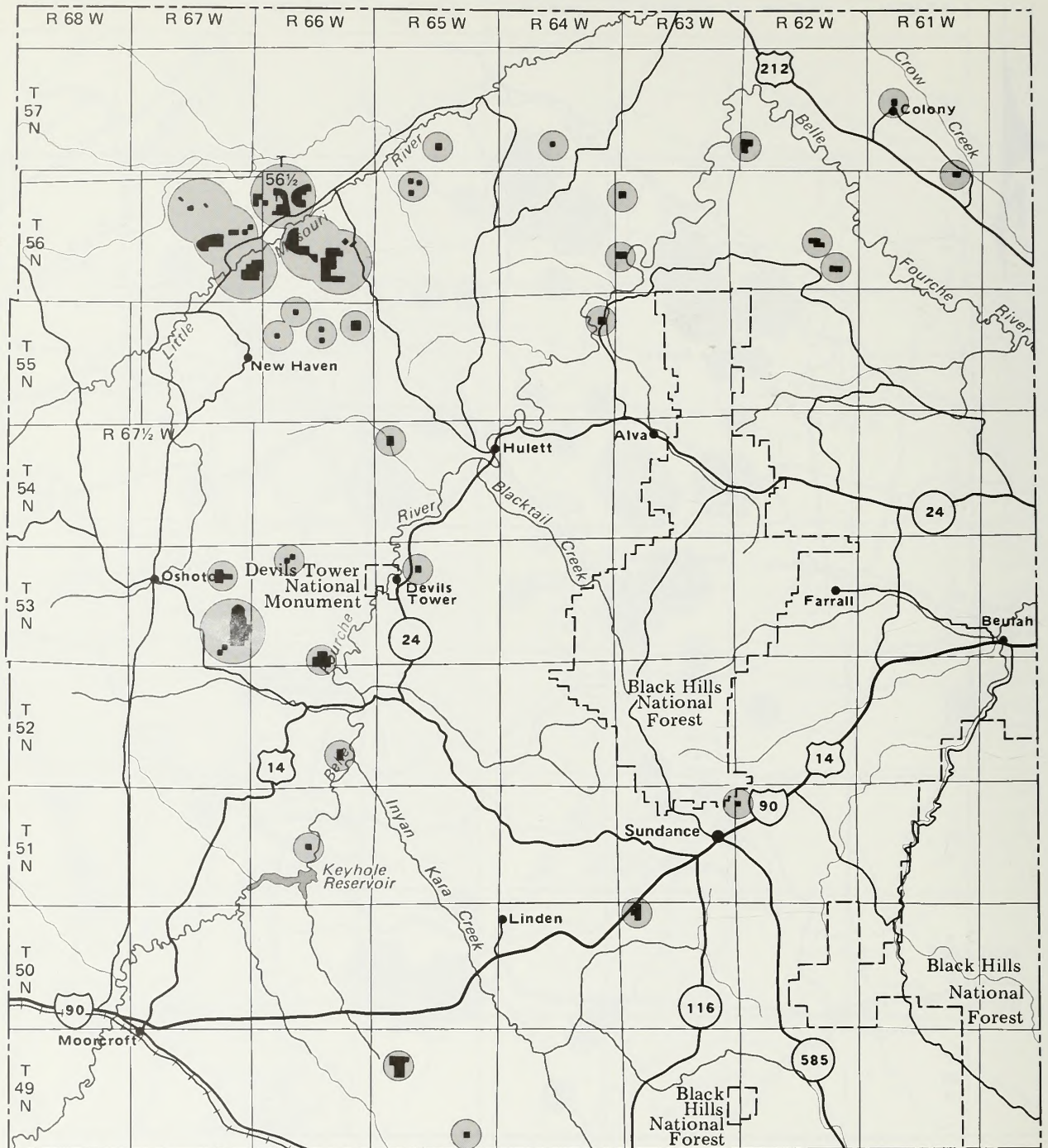
Map 16b **Commercial Forest Land—Crook County**



 Commercial Forest Land*

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

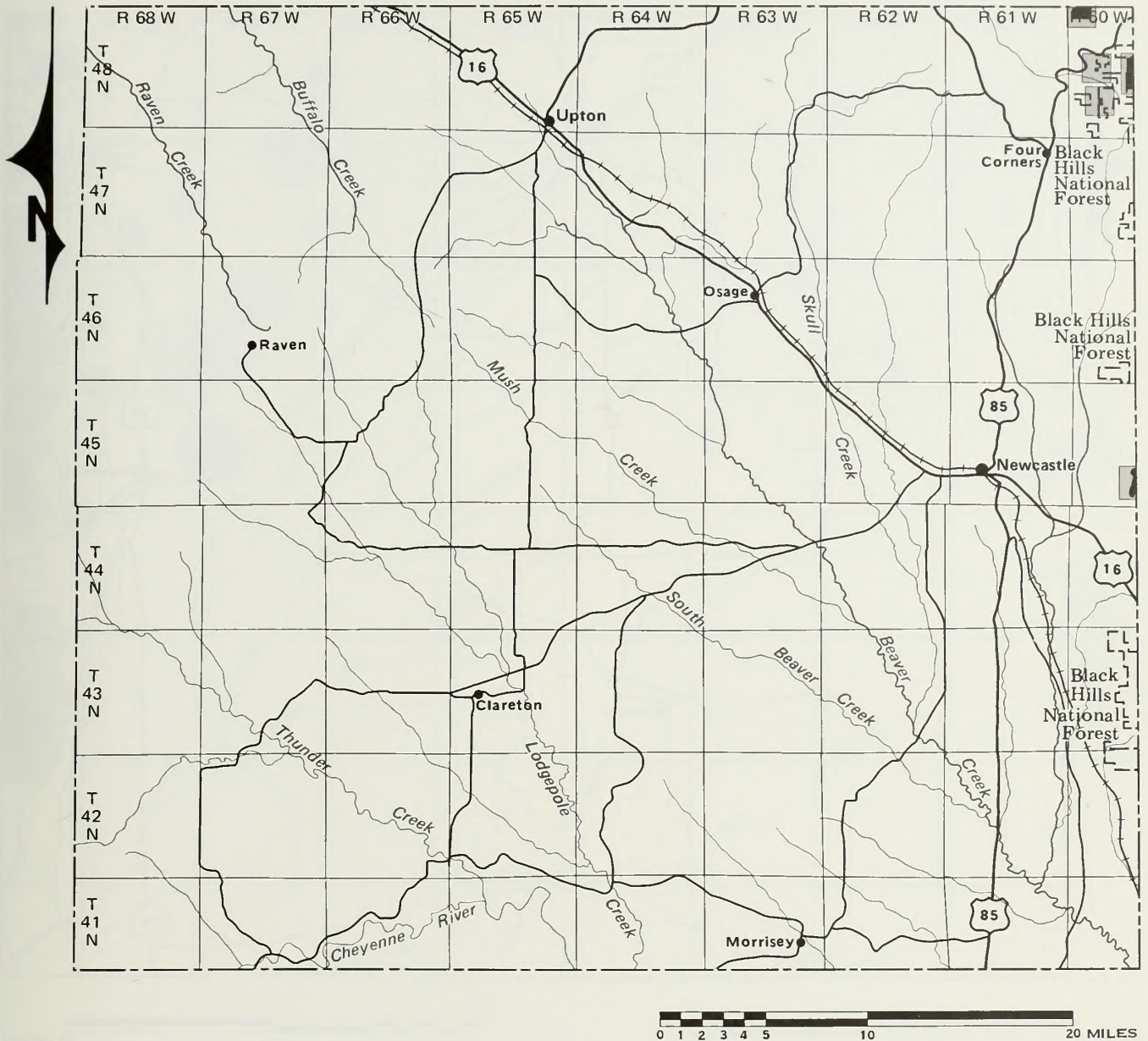
Map 16c Non-Commercial Forest Land—Crook County



● Non-Commercial Forest Land*

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

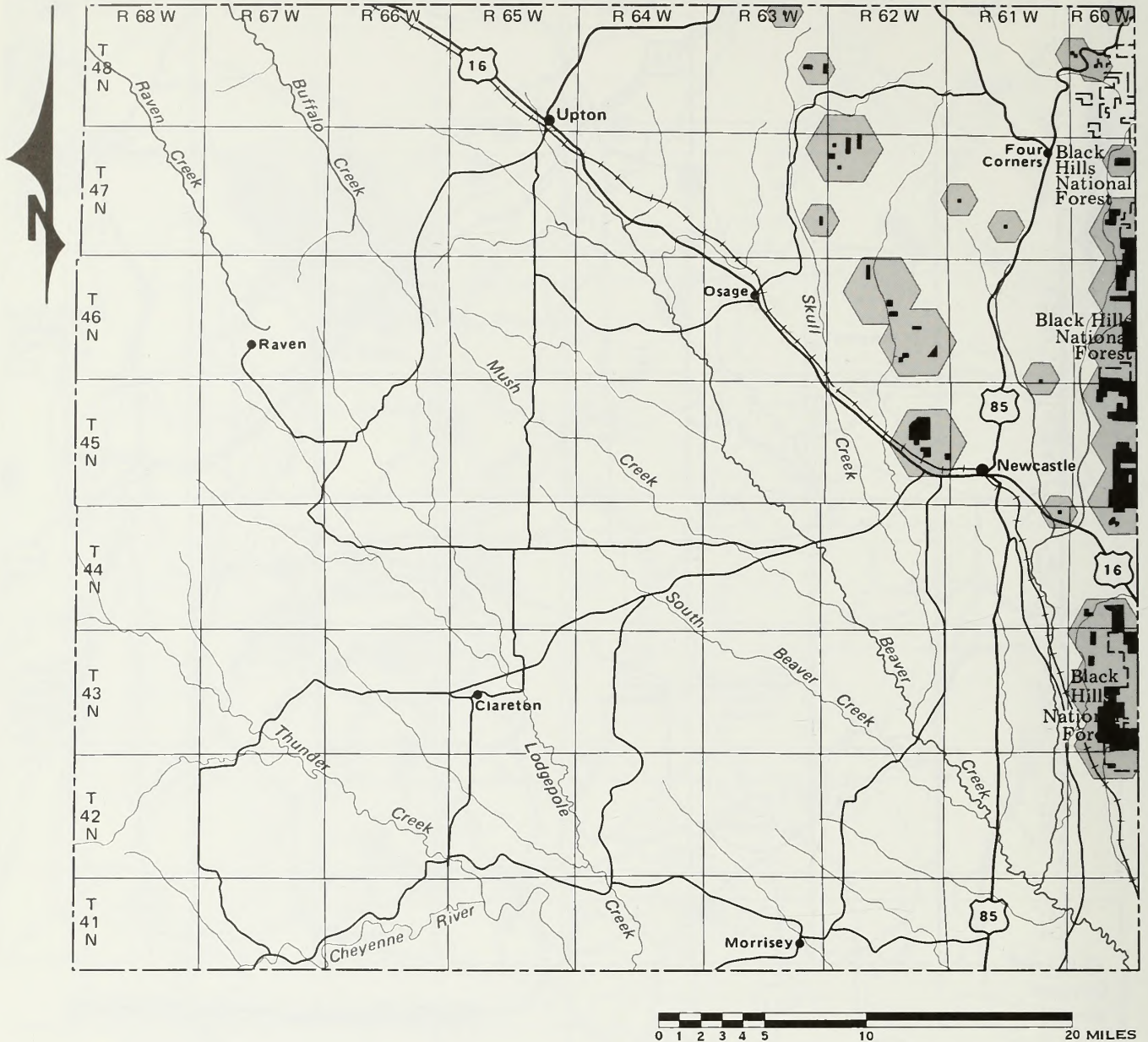
Map 17a **Timber Sale Areas—Weston County**



*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

Timber Sale Area *

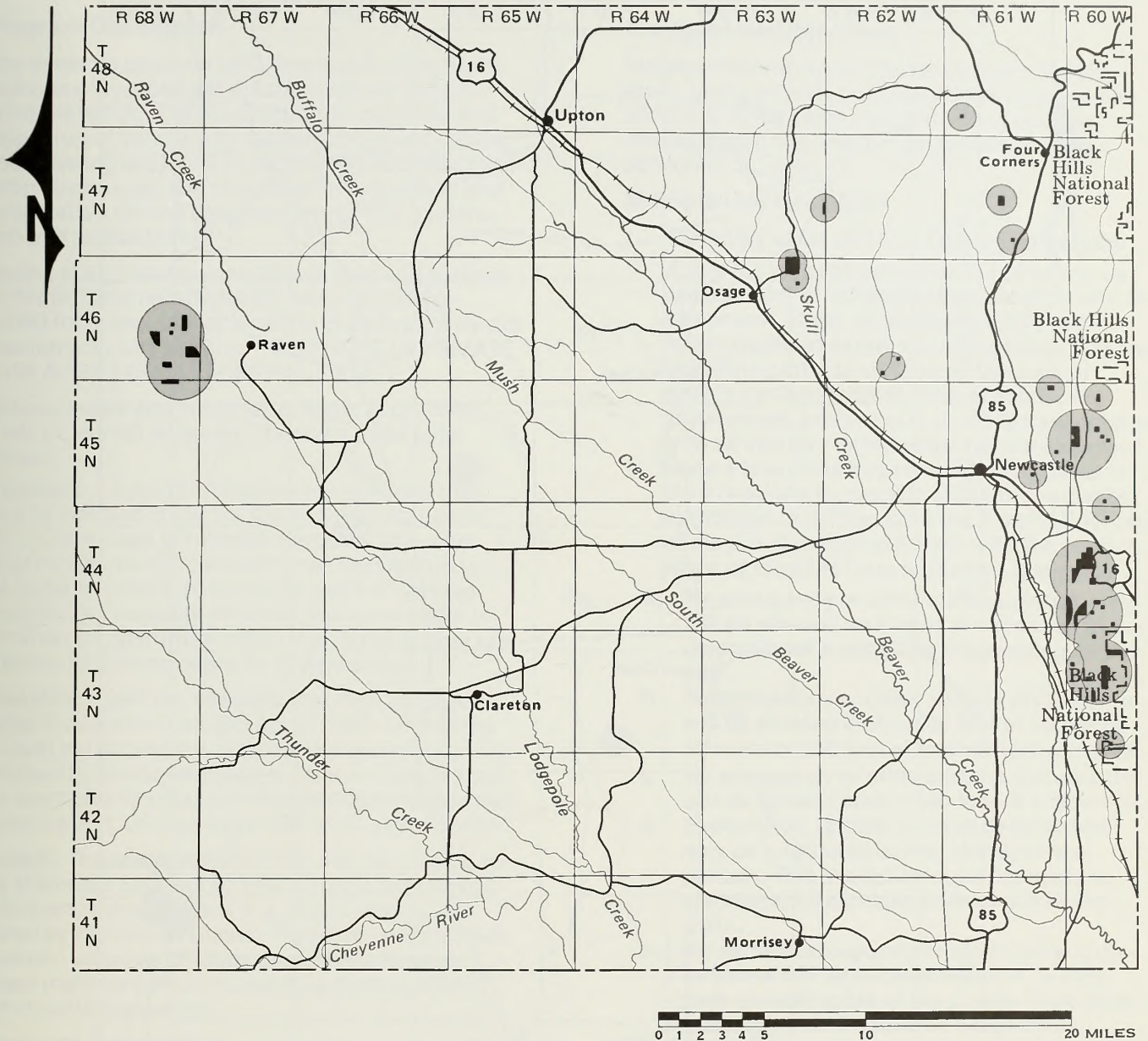
Map 17b Commercial Forest Land—Weston County



Commercial Forest Land*

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

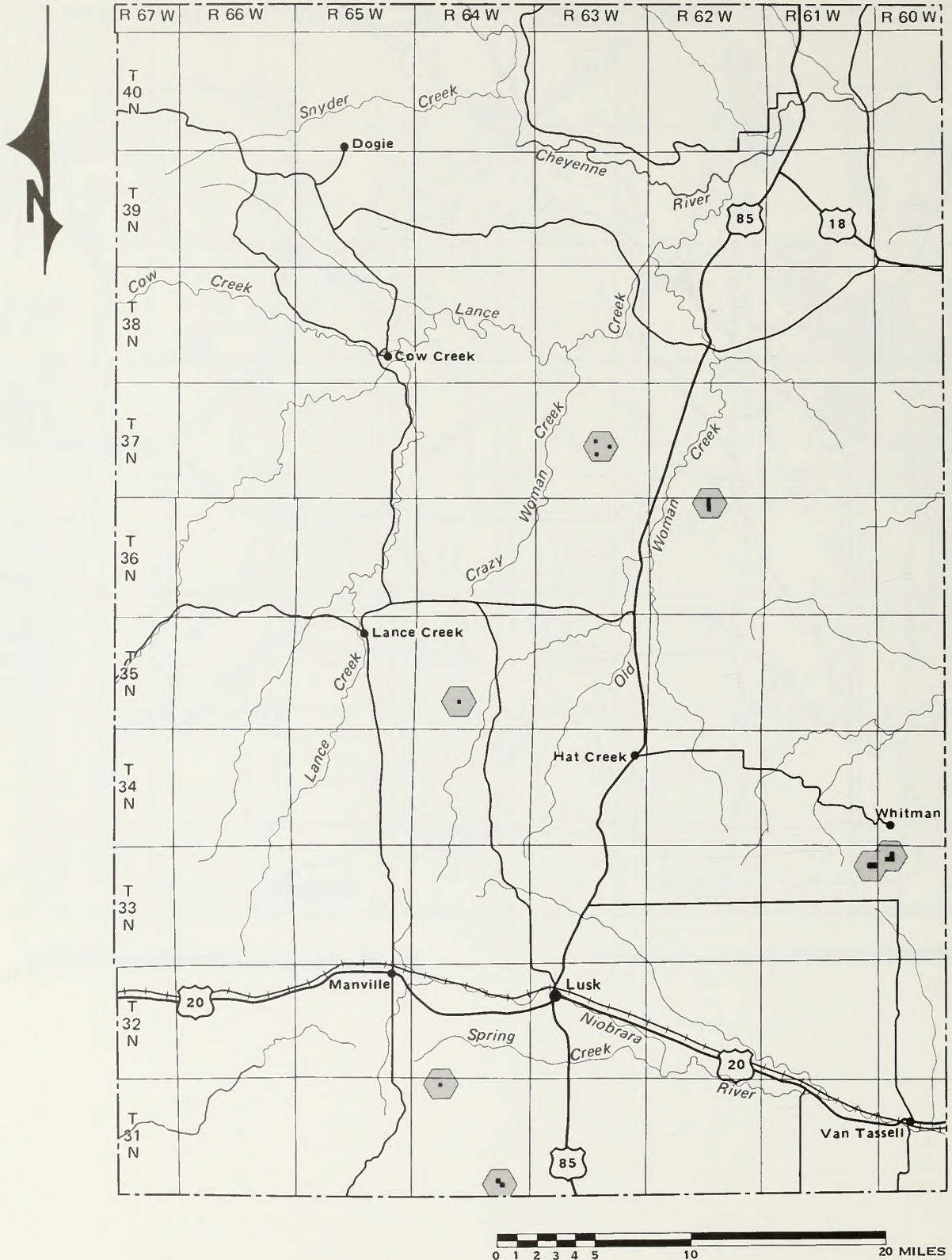
Map 17c Non-Commercial Forest Land—Weston County



● Non-Commercial Forest Land*

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

Map 18 Commercial Forest Land—Niobrara County



Commercial Forest Land*

*Symbols are used to identify relative location of affected areas and to classify data types. Due to the reduced scale, they do not reflect actual location of the data. If this information is needed, please contact the Casper District or Newcastle Resource Area Office.

Minerals

Program Description

The minerals program includes: conducting examinations on mineral patent applications to determine the validity of the application; appraisal and disposing of minerals by lease, license and permit; coordinating exploration and mining activities with other lands uses; and providing for protection and reclamation of land disturbed by mineral exploration and production.

Mining plans, environmental analyses and surface protection and rehabilitation measures are required for lease, sale or location of federal minerals (see introductory section - "BLM ROLE IN PRIVATE SURFACE/FEDERAL MINERAL ESTATE").

Different laws and procedures apply to different kinds of federal minerals. There are three categories:

Locatable: Locatable minerals are minerals that may be claimed under the General Mining Law of 1872. Upon proof of mineral discovery and other legal requirements, claimants can obtain title to the federal mineral estate regardless of surface ownership. Locatable minerals known to occur in commercial quantities within the planning area are uranium and some deposits of bentonite.

Leasable: These are minerals that may be leased under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920. Title to the mineral estate and the surface, if it is public land, is retained by the United States. Coal and oil and gas are examples of leasable minerals found within the planning unit. Oil and gas is the most significant.

Salable: These are minerals that may be sold under the Materials Sale Act of 1947. Title to the mineral estate and the surface, if it is public land, is retained by the United States. These minerals include common varieties of stone and clinker (scoria). These materials are in demand for energy-related construction activities.

Resource Description

Mineral resources in the planning unit are a major source of public and private income. This revenue comes from the direct sale of minerals, from wages and salaries paid to employees and from taxes and royalties paid by industry to state, local and federal governments.

Presently oil and gas production accounts for 51 percent of Weston County's total valuation; 32.5 percent of Niobrara County's total valuation; and 49 percent of Crook County's total valuation.

Multiple Use Objectives

Manage mineral resources for efficient development, giving priority consideration to energy minerals but, at the same time, providing environmental protection and mitigation of socio-economic impacts.

Multiple Use Decisions

1. Summary of Oil and Gas Lease Stipulations

Apply the lease stipulations listed below, as appropriate, for oil and gas exploration and development. These stipulations apply to all federal mineral estate including those reserves underlying private surface. *In the case of private surface/federal mineral estate, the stipulations apply only to activities associated with oil and gas exploration and development.* Once a lease has been issued, exceptions or modifications to specific stipulations can be authorized in writing from the District Engineer of the U.S. Geological Survey with the concurrence of the BLM Casper District Manager.

- a. No occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed on slopes in excess of 25 percent without a complete engineering analysis.
- b. No occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed within 500 feet of perennial streams or 200 feet of intermittent streams.
- c. No occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed within 500 feet of a reservoir.
- d. Exploration, drilling or other development may be prohibited during muddy or wet periods. This limitation does not apply to maintenance and operation of producing wells.
- e. No surface occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed within a ¼ mile zone on both sides of the Custer Expedition and Cheyenne-Deadwood Stage trails.
- f. Restrict mineral exploration, development and disturbances on antelope concentration areas and critical deer winter ranges from November 1 to April 30.
- g. Allow no occupancy or other surface disturbance within a 1,320-foot radius of the center of a sage grouse strutting ground (lek). In order to protect the nesting area around the strutting ground, exploration, drilling and other development activity will not be allowed within a 1 ¾ mile distance from the ¼ mile lek protection zone from March 1 to June 15. Route all rights-of-way around strutting grounds if possible.

- h. **Allow no surface disturbance or occupancy within a one mile radius of known sharptail grouse dancing grounds during the mating, nesting and brood rearing period of March 1 to June 15 each year. Allow no surface disturbance or occupancy within 250 yards of the dancing grounds at any time of the year.**
- i. **Designate buffer zones around active golden eagle and prairie falcon nests in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Do not allow surface disturbance activities within the buffer from March 1 to June 30. Similar buffer areas will be established for bald eagle, peregrine falcon and osprey if active nests are located.**

Rationale: The above stipulations were developed so that mineral activity can be allowed on all federal mineral estate in the planning area while protecting soil, water, wildlife and recreation values. The stipulations are commonly used for federal oil and gas leases throughout Wyoming. The source decisions and rationale for each stipulation are included in this brochure. The decisions and associated stipulations are:

Stipulations a-d: Soil, Water and Air Decision 3
 Stipulation e: Recreation Decision 5
 Stipulations f-i: Wildlife Decision 1

2. Mineral material sale areas (See Maps 19, 20, and 21)

Salable federal mineral materials such as scoria, shale and moss rock will be made available in the following manner:

- a. **Complete field studies and identify all federal mineral material sites by September 1984.**
- b. **Develop a disposal plan for federal mineral material in cooperation with city, county, state and other federal agencies, and with private individuals and groups, to serve the mineral material needs for Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties for the next ten years. Complete these plans by April 1986.**

Rationale: The rapidly growing demand for salable mineral materials has created a need to plan for the orderly and efficient development of these materials.

3. Surface Protection Plans

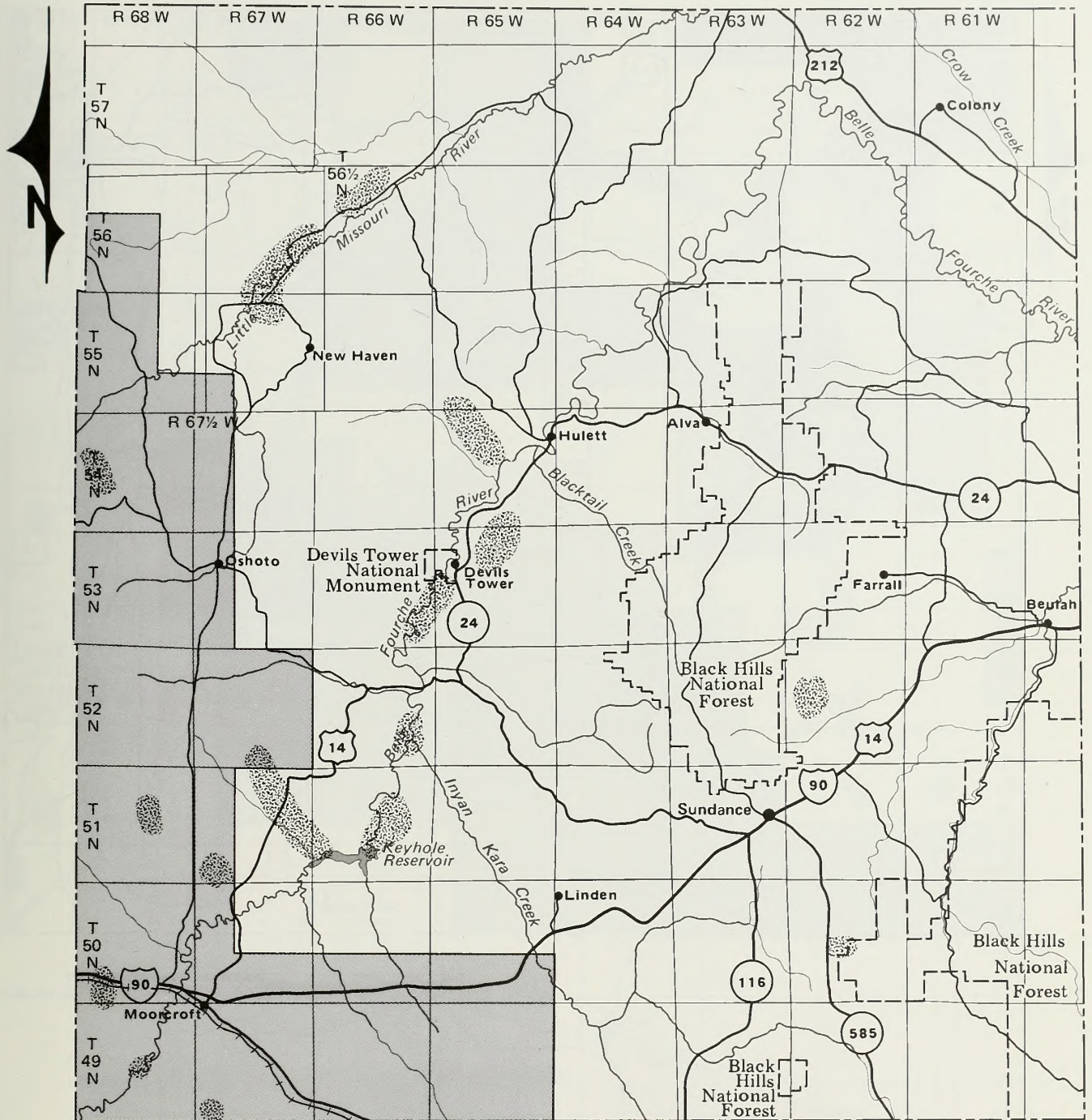
Develop surface protection plans on BLM administered public lands where there are existing oil and gas fields (see Maps 19, 20, 21). Coordinate with oil companies, private landowners, U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Forest Service.



Rationale: Oil and gas field rehabilitation plans will allow orderly withdrawal from closure of a field over a period of time and provide uniform reclamation procedures throughout the planning area.



Map 19

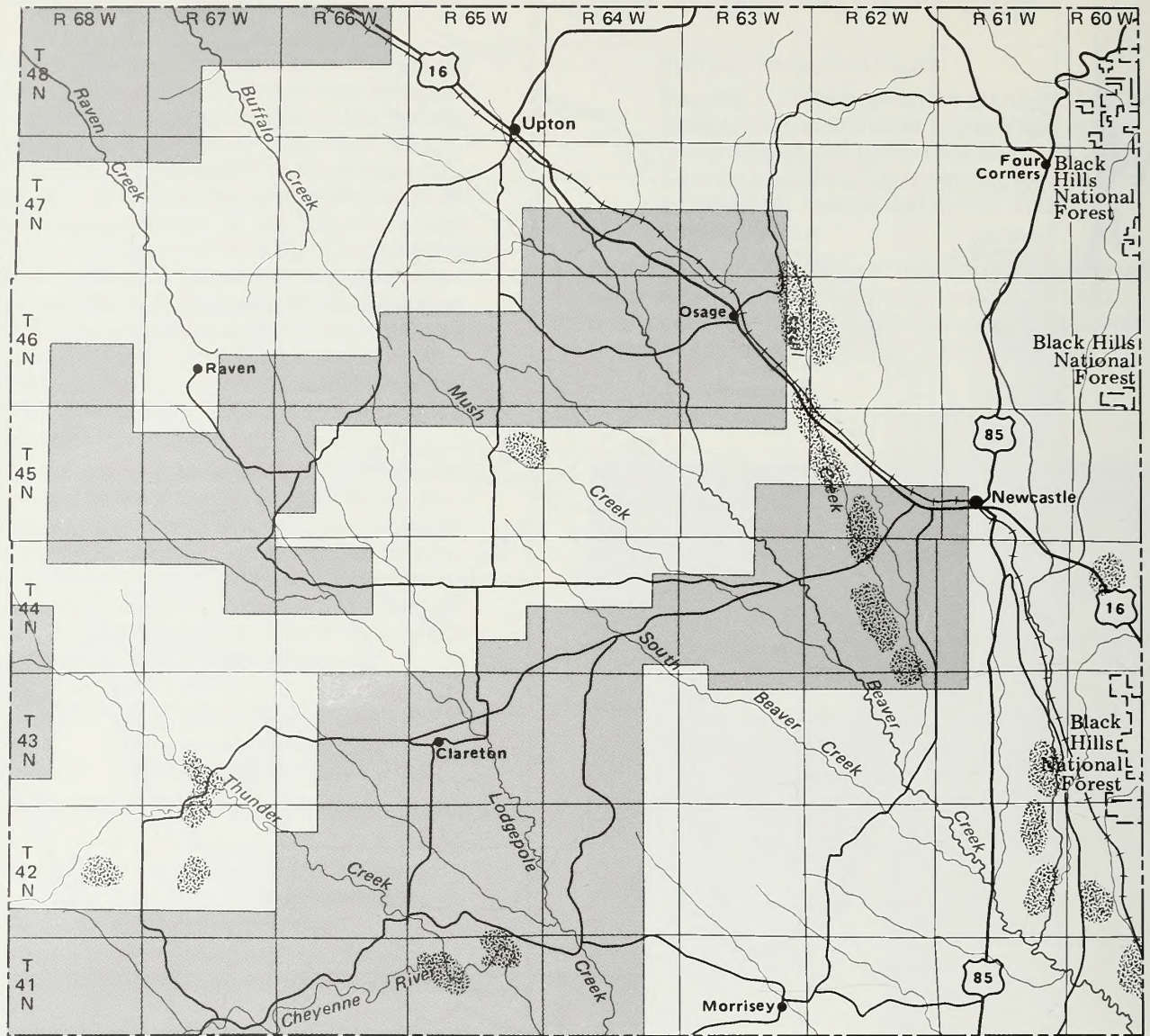
Mineral Material Deposits and Oil & Gas Areas—Crook County





-  Known Deposits of Mineral Materials where Inventories will be Conducted on Federal Mineral Estate
-  Oil and Gas Area (42 Fields) — Identified for Surface Protection Plans on Public Land Surface

To illustrate data, the total areas are shown without regard to land ownership. Decisions apply only to BLM administered public lands and mineral estate.

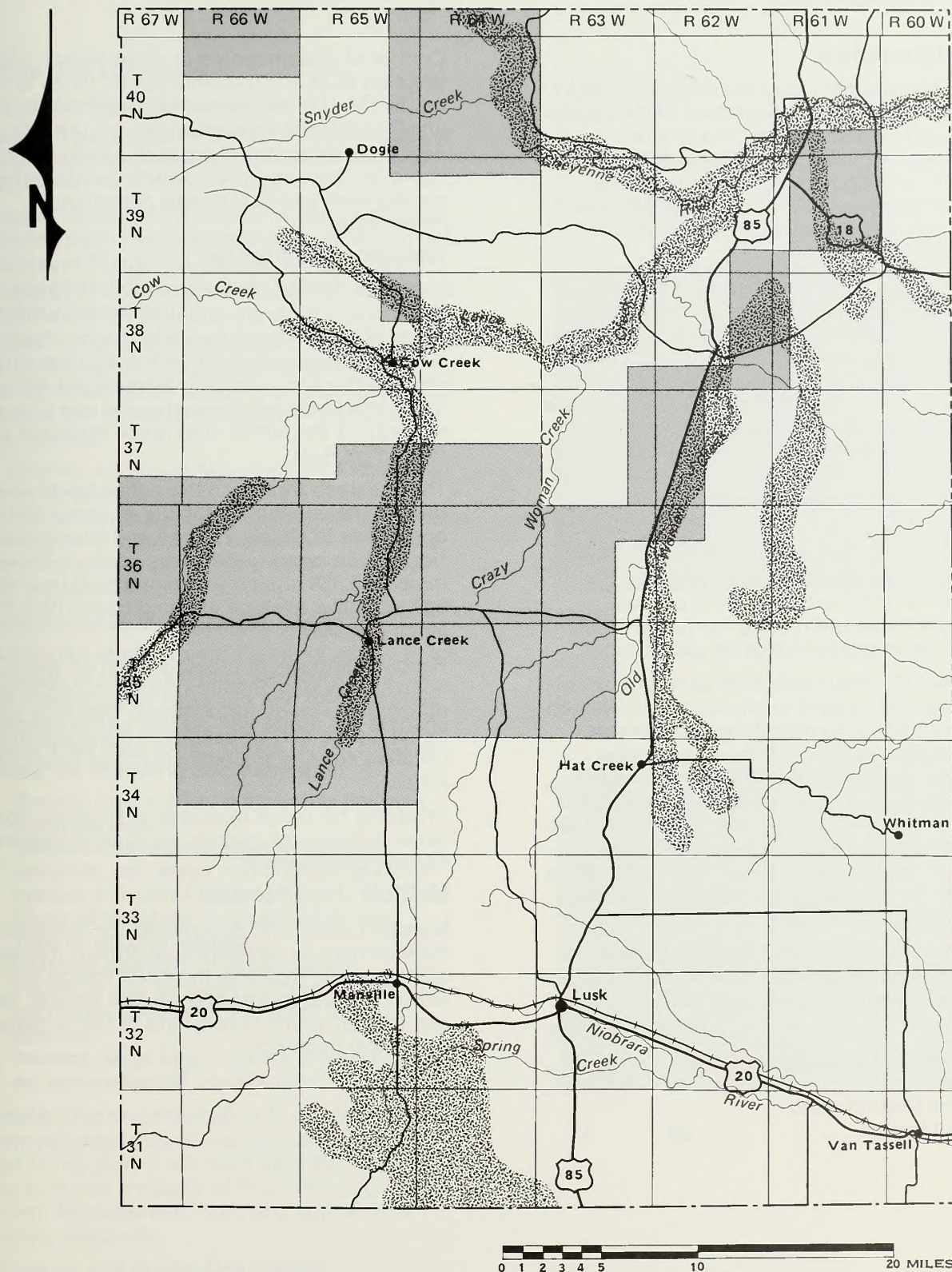
Map 20 Mineral Material Deposits and Oil & Gas Areas—Weston County



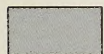
-  Known Deposits of Mineral Materials where Inventories will be Conducted on Federal Mineral Estate
-  Oil and Gas Area (34 Fields) — Identified for Surface Protection Plans on Public Land Surface

To illustrate data, the total areas are shown without regard to land ownership. Decisions apply only to BLM administered public lands and mineral estate.

Map 21 Mineral Material Deposits and Oil & Gas Areas—Niobrara County



Known Deposits of Mineral Materials where Inventories will be Conducted on Federal Mineral Estate



Oil and Gas Area (26 Fields) — Identified for Surface Protection Plans on Public Land Surface

To illustrate data, the total areas are shown without regard to land ownership. Decisions apply only to BLM administered public lands and mineral estate.

Range Management

Program Description

The range management program deals with the inventory, evaluation and management of the vegetative resources on public lands. The program includes authorization and supervision of livestock grazing use, development and maintenance of livestock management facilities and protection of the range from weed infestation, pests and disease.

Since 1976 weed control on BLM administered public lands has been carried out by the Wyoming Department of Agriculture and local weed and pest boards. Under contract, the Bureau of Land Management appropriates money each year to the Department of Agriculture. The Department of Agriculture then distributes these funds to counties based upon requests from the weed and pest boards and statewide priorities. BLM does not stipulate funding levels for the counties or treatment sites within counties.

Beginning in 1982 a minor change will be initiated in the system. The funds will be distributed to county boards from the BLM district offices. However, the Department of Agriculture will still determine the amount of funds for each county.

In 1982 Crook County is expected to receive about \$4,800 to treat 89 acres of public lands and Weston County about \$2,500 to treat 75 acres. Niobrara County is not scheduled to receive funding for public land weed control in 1982. Lessees desiring weed control should work with the local weed and pest board to acquire funding priority for their allotment or for their county. BLM is reviewing weed and pest control policies to determine if alternative funding can be used and if authorization for spraying can be granted to lessees.

Although the allocation for Crook and Weston counties appears small, the proportion of available funding designated for Crook and Weston is high:

	<u>Crook</u>	<u>Weston</u>
% of BLM public land in Casper District	6	3
% of Casper District weed control budget	23	12

Control of grasshoppers or other insect infestations on BLM administered public lands is carried out by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). APHIS submits control proposals to BLM for approval. Once approved, APHIS carries out all control work and BLM makes compliance inspections.

Resource Description

Livestock operations have existed in Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties for more than 100 years. Many of the pioneers in the ranching industry acquired ownership of the surface estate through the Stock Raising Homestead Act of 1916. The lands not homesteaded make up the majority of the public land range resource administered by BLM.

The livestock forage on the public lands contributes to the economic stability of about 300 ranch operations in Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties. Public lands under lease produce approximately 50,039 animal unit months (AUMs) of forage annually. Average carrying capacity is 5.87 acres per AUM.

Range improvement projects such as water developments and fencing are needed to properly utilize these lands for domestic livestock grazing. Some leases can be used only during winter because snow is the only source of livestock water.

Problems for range management include conflicts between livestock grazing, recreation use and mineral development.

Multiple Use Objective

Manage public land designated for intensive management by developing allotment management plans to increase livestock forage and improve both watershed and wildlife habitat. Maintain the remaining public land in fair or better ecological condition.

Multiple Use Decisions

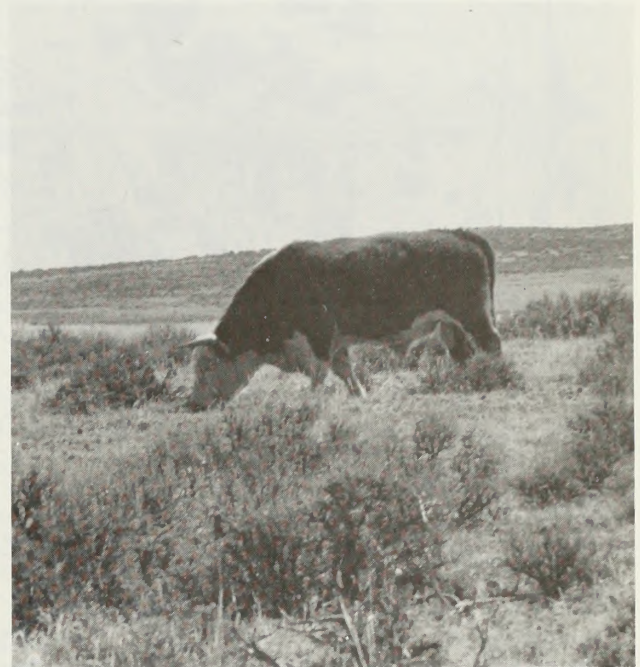
1. Intensive Management Areas

Intensive management will be applied first to BLM grazing allotments shown on Maps 22, 23, 24.

Rationale: Intensive management can be defined as development and implementation of Allotment Management Plans that provide for watershed, livestock and wildlife needs along with necessary range improvements.

Priorities for developing allotment management plans and expenditure of range betterment funds will be in public lands containing larger acreages and where the potential to improve range condition is highest.

Well planned Allotment Management Plans cooperatively developed by the lessee and the BLM can improve the rangelands by increasing production of types of vegetation necessary to provide soil and watershed protection, quality livestock forage and good wildlife habitat.



2. Non-Intensive Management Areas

Allotment Management Plans for public lands outside of intensive management areas can be developed by BLM, the Soil Conservation Service or the lessee. Any Allotment Management Plan that covers public lands, must include the following documentation;

- a. General information concerning the management area.
- b. Wildlife information such as species numbers, use areas and how the grazing system will benefit them.
- c. Class of livestock and season of use.
- d. Type of grazing system.
- e. Carrying capacity of each pasture.
- f. Period of use for each pasture and the maximum number of livestock in each pasture.
- g. Needed range improvement projects.
- h. An environmental assessment.

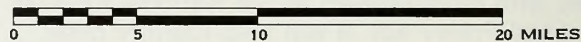
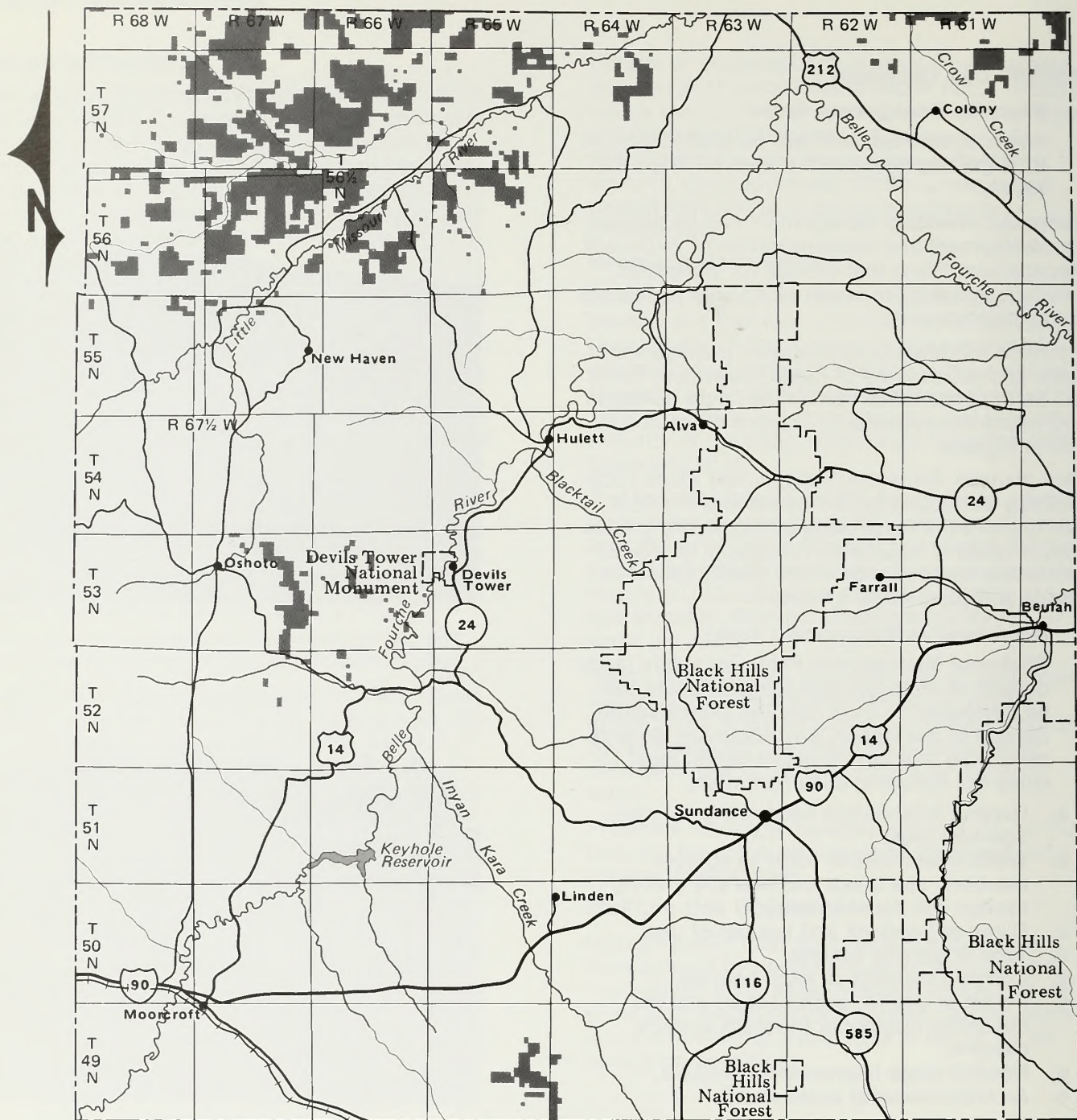
Rationale: This documentation is needed to comply with requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. It will help identify other resource values, impacts of implementing an Allotment Management Plan, and appropriate mitigating measures.




3. Predator and Prairie Dog Control

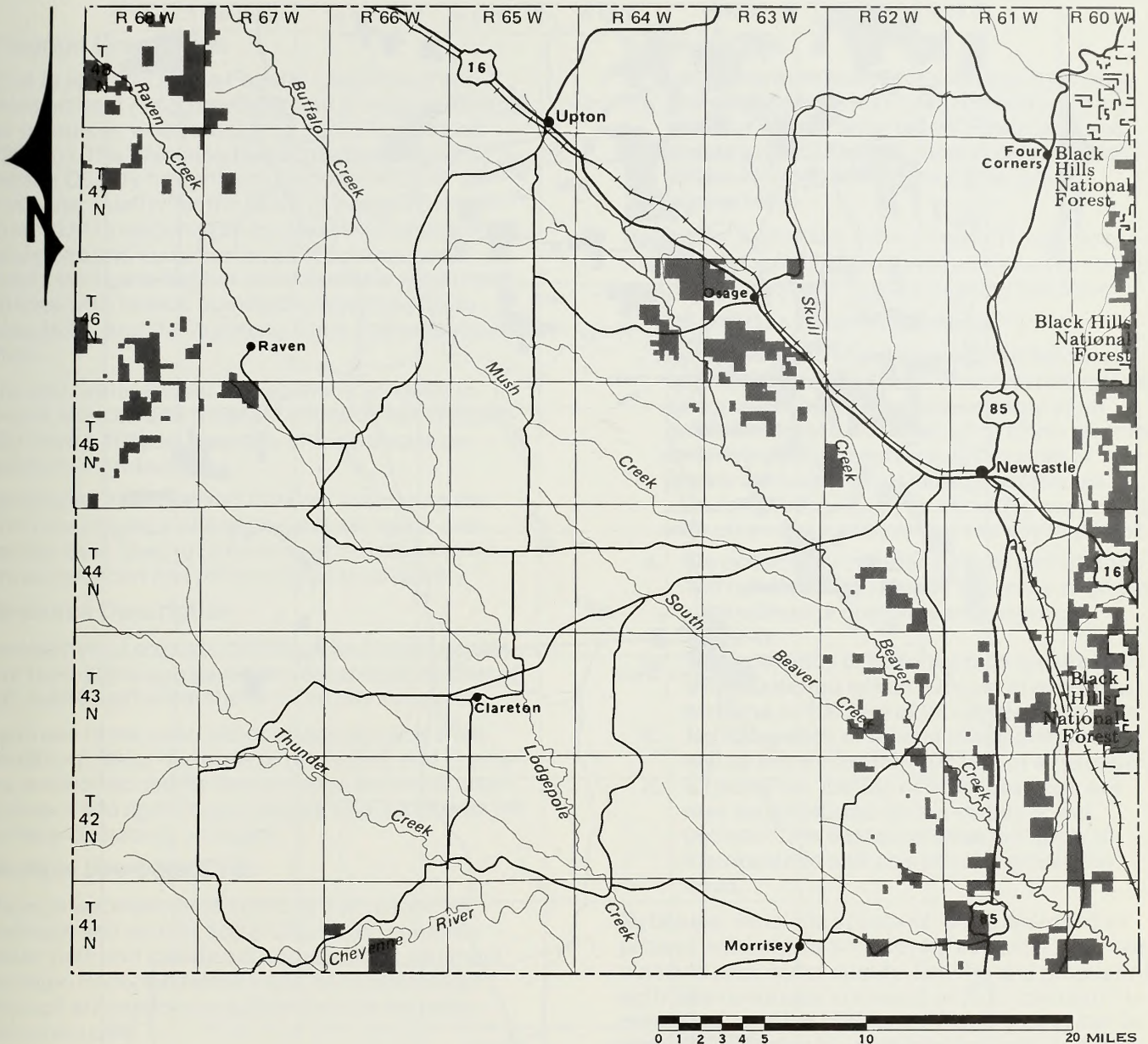
Decisions concerning predator and prairie dog control are included in the Wildlife Section of this brochure—decisions 3 and 4.

Map 22 Intensive Range Management—Crook County



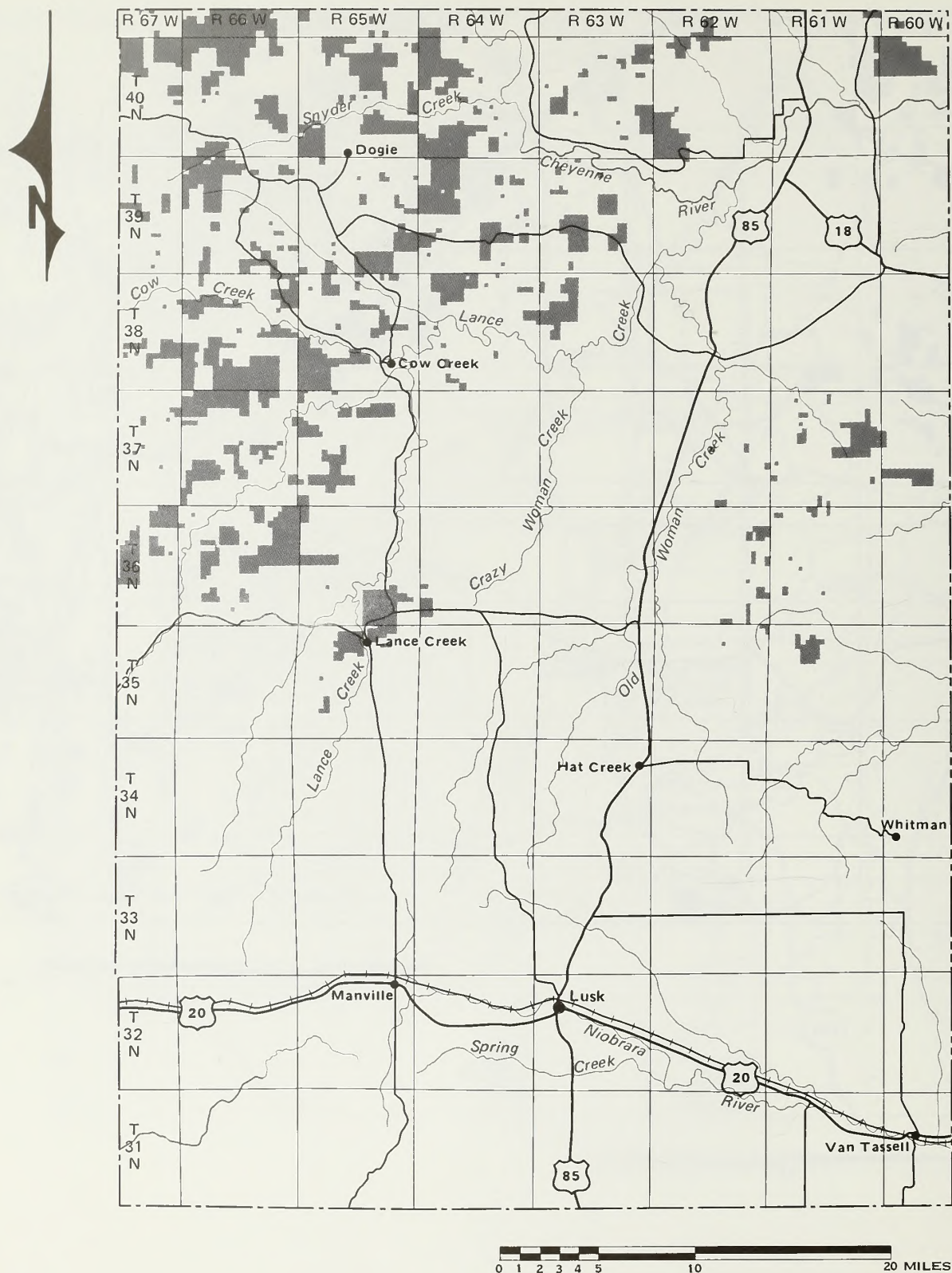
 BLM Lands that will Recieve First Priority for Intensive Range Management

Map 23 Intensive Range Management—Weston County



■ BLM Lands that will Recieve First Priority
for Intensive Range Management

Map 24 Intensive Range Management—Niobrara County



BLM Lands that will Recieve First Priority
for Intensive Range Management

Soil, Water and Air

Program Description

BLM is required by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act to consider and protect water and air resources when managing public lands (Sec. 02(a)(S)). The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality has primary responsibility for air and water quality for the State of Wyoming. However, BLM is responsible for assuring management decisions and activities on BLM administered public lands and federal mineral estate are in compliance with federal standards, Wyoming State Standards, and the Wyoming State Implementation Plan.

The soil, water and air management program in Crook, Weston and Niobrara counties has historically been a support program with emphasis on watershed protection.

Watershed management involves evaluating the interrelationships of soil, vegetation, water and various land uses to determine alternatives to improve, maintain and protect watershed quality.

Resource Description

Inventories of erosion condition and trend, vegetative type, and slope have been completed on part of the public land watersheds in the planning area.

Land use is the main factor affecting watershed condition. Major methods of protecting and improving watershed quality are intensive livestock management and applying protective stipulations to surface-disturbing activities.

Multiple Use Objectives

Manage watersheds to stabilize soil resources, maintain and restore soil productivity, enhance water yield and quality and reduce flood sediment damage. Reduce adverse impacts to watershed through stipulations in authorizations for other resource uses.

Multiple Use Decisions

1. Cooperative Plans

Develop cooperative plans for soil and water management with state, U.S. Forest Service and private landowners to protect the soil and reduce siltation in perennial and intermittent streams.

Rationale: All of the watersheds in the planning units involve a number of landowners. In order to reduce soil loss and have cleaner water, cooperation between all landowners is needed.

2. Inventories

Complete inventories for soils and hydrology and establish a water quality monitoring program for waters on or below public land and private surface/federal mineral estate which will be affected by actions of the federal government.

Rationale: Additional data is needed to adequately manage the soil and water resources and to define specific sources and causes of water pollution.

3. Oil and Gas Lease Stipulations

Apply the lease stipulations listed below, as appropriate, for oil and gas exploration and development. These stipulations apply to all federal mineral estate including those reserves underlying private surface. *In the case of private surface/federal mineral estate, the stipulations apply only to activities associated with oil and gas exploration and development.*

- a. **No occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed on slopes in excess of 25 percent without a complete engineering analysis.**
- b. **No occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed within 500 feet of perennial streams or 200 feet of intermittent streams.**
- c. **No occupancy or other surface disturbance will be allowed within 500 feet of a reservoir.**
- d. **Exploration, drilling or other development may be prohibited during muddy or wet periods. This limitation does not apply to maintenance and operation of producing wells.**

Rationale: All of the stipulations are designed to protect watersheds and prevent excessive soil erosion and poor water quality. Drilling and production activities on slopes in excess of 25% can result in severe soil erosion problems. Water quality can be adversely affected by increased toxicant and siltation levels from adjacent surface disturbance and oil or chemical spills. Operations during wet and muddy periods magnifies adverse impacts to the watersheds.

Interrelationships With Other Plans

A special effort was made to coordinate this plan with other federal, state and local government agencies.

Government entities consulted include the U.S. Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, County Commissioners and County Planners.

Some of the decisions have significant on and off site implications affecting other agencies. Decisions to make public lands available for public purposes should benefit local governments in the planning unit.

Livestock grazing decisions will affect agencies such as the Soil Conservation Service and U.S. Forest Service, who work with the same range users that BLM does.

Range management practices affect wildlife populations either beneficially or adversely and this is of direct interest to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Existing procedures call for cooperative planning on range management by all agencies involved.

Wildlife management decisions have been coordinated with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to ensure habitat management is consistent with objectives for each wildlife species.

Using mineral materials for state, city and county use will benefit local government and allow them to develop long range road construction plans.

Actions After the Land Use Plan

The Newcastle Resource Area Management Framework Plan will be followed by on-the-ground actions. Implementation actions are subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

An environmental assessment is prepared for each action whether it is initiated by others or by BLM. If the impacts are unacceptable, the proposed action may be modified or rejected.

Implementation of on-the-ground action initiated by BLM is contingent upon the necessary funding by Congress. It may be some time before some of these decisions are implemented. Any major changes in this plan will be subject to public review and comment.

Glossary

Allotment Management Plan (AMP): A written plan for the management of livestock grazing designed to attain prescribed goals for each grazing allotment (a parcel of public lands assigned to a grazing lessee). Each AMP is prepared in cooperation with the livestock operator. AMPs establish grazing use patterns or systems to stimulate the growth of the desired vegetation.

Animal Unit Month (AUM): A measure of forage or feed required to maintain one cow or five sheep for a period one month. The AUM is primarily used in measuring the amount of forage on public lands.

Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC): An area within the public lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards. The identification of a potential ACEC does not, of itself, change or prevent change of the management or use of public lands.

Cooperative Access Agreement: Voluntary arrangements between BLM and private landowners to resolve conflicts between recreationists and grazing lessees.

Commercial Forest: Forest land producing 20 cubic feet or more per acre per year of wood products and located so that the economic benefit of harvest exceed administrative costs and resource damage.

Critical Wildlife Habitat: Land area essential to the propagation of a wildlife species or population. It includes seasonal concentration areas and areas essential for reproduction.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): A document prepared in response to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The EIS assesses the impacts of a proposed action on the quality of the human environment. It also identifies mitigating measures that can be employed to reduce adverse impacts. The EIS is a decisionmaking tool to weigh the environmental consequences of a proposed action.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA): A comprehensive federal law combining and consolidating many archaic and often conflicting federal land management laws. It is the first clear cut mandate Congress has ever given to the Bureau of Land Management for managing the public lands under its jurisdiction. Also called the BLM Organic Act.

Forage: Plants available to and chosen for consumption by grazing animals.

Grazing Allotment: A public land area leased to a private livestock operator under a plan of management for a prescribed number of grazing animals.

Habitat Management Plan (HMP): A BLM activity plan designed for a specific area to achieve maximum wildlife production.

Intensive Range Management: Development of AMPs to increase livestock forage and improve watershed and wildlife habitat.

Mitigation: A modification to lessen the negative results or increase the beneficial aspects of a proposed action. Mitigation is a critical element in environmental statements.

Multiple Use Management: A philosophy designed to enable public lands to be managed for as many uses as practical. This philosophy recognizes diverse needs of the public and tries to relate these needs to the various resource values on the land.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA): This act requires that federal agencies consider and document the environmental impact of proposed legislation or actions that would have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality require environmental statements to comply with this law.

Off-Road Vehicle (ORV): Any vehicle capable of, or designed for travel on or immediately over land, water or other natural terrain, deriving motive power from any sources other than muscle, excluding: (1) any non-amphibious registered motorboat; (2) any military, fire, emergency, law enforcement or other government vehicle while being used for official or emergency purposes; and (3) any vehicle whose use is expressly authorized on public land.

Perennial Stream: A stream that flows all the time.

Public Lands: Any land and interest in land owned by the U.S. and administered by the Bureau of Land Management. This does not include lands on the Outer Continental Shelf or lands held for the benefit of Indian tribes.

Public Sale (Bureau Motion): Sale of public land initiated by BLM. The specific tract must have no public values or be difficult to manage due to isolation within other non-federal holdings. Public sale is by auction to the highest bidder at or above the appraised value.

Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP): An act passed by Congress on June 14, 1926, which allows for the disposal of public lands to certain governmental agencies or other qualified organizations for recreational or public purpose needs.

Reclamation of Mined Land: The process of returning mined lands to a stable condition and form consistent with their premining productivity and use or other approved post-mining land use. Also called rehabilitation.

Riparian Habitat: Natural wildlife abode situated on or pertaining to the bank of a river, stream or other body of water.

Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds: A specific area where sage grouse congregate to perform courtship displays during breeding season.

Sanitary Landfills: Land for disposing of solid municipal or industrial waste such as garbage, paper, sludge, cans, glass or other disposable items. Waste is placed in trenches and covered with soil. Landfills may be located where additional filling is needed prior to converting the land to other uses.

Watershed: The land surface contained within a natural surface water drainage system.

Bureau of Land Management

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